Interpersonal C
Modern Or ...ded
for ind i uals a ups who wish to improve th ability to communicate in th organization. It provides immediate and practical help for the daily communication problems to be faced within all organizations. Stripped of frills, jargon, and involved academic theory and written in explicit and vigorou language, this fascinating volume r lies solely on material that has proved valuable to technical, managerial, and executive personnel in a wide range of business and professional groups.

This book considers both verbal and nonverbal elements of human interaction and places emphasis on four major areas: small group communication, barriers to communication, listening, and persuasion in the organizational context.

Part I describes the modern organization and its influence on the nature and flow of speech-communication. It treats small group communications in relation to the overall functions of the organization, and it examines interpersonal communication from the viewpoint of what can be done to increase efficiency and productivity

Part II analyzes the individual participant's need to be more effective as he interacts with his group in a variety of speech-communication situations The emphasis is on individual psychology, motivation, and speaking skills.

Part II also provides a thorough treatment of listening skills and techniques of persuasion.

Based upon the latest research in [illegible]

Preface

The material in *Interpersonal Communication in the Modern Organization* is already familiar to thousands of men and women in business, industry, government, and education who have worked with one or several of the authors Collectively, the authors of this text have had approximately seventy-five years of experience analyzing the communication problems of such organizations as state departments of education, the Department of Agriculture, the Treasury Department, the Internal Revenue Service, the Army, the Air Force, the Veterans' Administration of the United States, municipal governments, chambers of commerce, political parties, physicians' and nurses' organizations, juvenile judges, juvenile officers, hospital administrators and a host of business concerns, including General Electric, U S Steel, General Motors, 3M Corp , Honeywell Aero, Honeywell Ordinance, IBM, Control Data, Ford, National Cash Register, General Mills, and Castle and Cooke

Each author is a nationally recognized authority in interpersonal communication, and each has repeatedly tailored a training program in communication to meet the needs of a particular organization The material in this book is the distillation of their years of experience

The authors became enthusiastic about writing a practical, nonacademic treatment of communication in the modern organization while interacting with members of organizations These people were eager to learn but in no mood for frills They demanded the maximum results in the shortest possible period of time They were frustrated by involved academic theory They wanted immediate practical help with their com-

munication problems Explicitly and in vigorous language they demanded a briefing of plain talk without jargon *Interpersonal Communication in the Modern Organization* is designed to meet these requirements It contains only material that has been tested in many presentations to technical, managerial, and executive personnel in a wide range of business and professional groups

The book is intended for individuals and groups involved in the gamut of organizational activities It is designed to supply theory and techniques to aid in solving the problems of interpersonal communication that crop up in the context of the modern organization It deals with both verbal and nonverbal elements of human interaction

The book has four major emphases (1) the organization and the small work groups, (2) interpersonal barriers to communication, (3) listening and interpersonal communication, and (4) persuasion in the organizational context The book is divided into two parts Part I, "The Organization and the Individual," describes the modern organization and its influence upon the nature and flow of speech communication It also treats small group communications as these relate to the overall functions of the organization Part I examines interpersonal communication from the viewpoint of what can be done to increase organizational efficiency and productivity

Part II, "The Individual in the Organization," analyzes the role of a person in a group wherein he needs to become more effective as an individual interacting in a myriad of speech-communication situations The emphasis in Part II is upon individual psychology, motivations, and speaking skills In addition, Part II provides thorough treatment of listening skills and techniques of persuasion

The content of this book is based on up to-date research in communication and the related fields of sociology, psychology, anthropology, and business administration The authors' experience with practical communication problems enables them to use case study materials and examples that carry immediate conviction and understanding to people working in the complex modern organization

Interpersonal Communication in the Modern Organization contributes to the applied liberal arts trends in higher education today As Dr Norman DeWitt, late Professor of Classics at the University of Minnesota, once stated "If you learn something you can't use, you haven't been educated, you have been entertained" His test of usefulness was the criterion to be met in writing this book It is the firm conviction of the authors that mastering the concepts and techniques contained therein will advance the liberal education of anyone using *Interpersonal Communication in the Modern Organization*

Although the overall structure and the basic assumptions of the book are the common product of all the authors, primary responsibility for the materials in the various chapters is as follows Ralph Nichols, Chapters 1, 10, 11, 12, Ernest Bormann, Chapters 4, 5, 6, 7, George Shapiro, Chapters 8, 9, William S Howell, Chapters 13, 14, 15, 16, William S Howell and Ernest Bormann, Chapter 2, Ernest Bormann and George Shapiro, Chapter 3

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Interpersonal Communication in the Modern Organization

The Organization and the Individual

THE SOCIAL CONTEXT OF INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION

PART I

Increasingly, all of us are involved in the varied activities of multiple organizations. Membership in the basic family group as well as participation in the groups that compose organizations varying in complexity from the voluntary service club to the multimillion-dollar corporation or multibillion-dollar government agency challenges us to become effective leaders and participants within the corporate structure. Of necessity, we turn to the study of ways in which people work and play *together*. We must all learn to fit comfortably and productively into a culture built of interrelated, competitive, and interlocking pyramided organizations.

All organizations are held together by, and perform their functions through, interpersonal communication. Part I looks at the modern organization as a system for processing information, setting goals, making plans and decisions, implementing action, and evaluating results. The facilitating and inhibiting influences of the modern organization on the efficiency of message production and processing is described and analyzed. Particular stress points relating to the organization and the small work groups that compose it are identified. Ways in which these affect individuals participating in them are considered.

The Spoken Word in the Modern World

CHAPTER 1

People were able to talk to each other long before they learned to share their ideas and information through reading and writing Thus, for the many thousands of years before language was either written or printed, speech was the only means of verbal communication As co-operation among the members of a group became increasingly necessary, the crude cries and signals of primitive man slowly developed into a more formal and useful language

Primitive men must have been excellent listeners—often their lives depended upon the cry of warning or alarm from a friend or companion Moreover, the ability to hear the sounds made by birds and animals—and to interpret these sounds correctly—was vital if our early ancestors were to obtain food for their next meal

Yes, life in the primitive jungle was aurally oriented In the deep shadow of the rain forest the ear was a more dependable source of knowledge than the eye and was much more relied upon Tribal leadership went to the man whose ears were most highly trained Moreover, the dominance of the ear over the eye did not die with the birth of civilization, far from it We were well into the fifteenth century before a German printer significantly changed our way of life

Before Gutenberg, man lived in essentially a speaking and listen-

ing culture Handwritten documents became fairly common, of course, after the appearance of the alphabet around 2000 B C, but not until the printing press appeared about 500 years ago did we really build the elaborate typographical culture in which we have been living Before Gutenberg, most of what we learned was told us by parents or grandparents, most of our knowledge was stored in our minds and communicated to others through oral symbols After Gutenberg, rapid duplication of manuscripts and documents was possible, and a widespread diffusion of ideas and knowledge could be accomplished by visual means

MAN'S WORLD BECOMES VISUALLY ORIENTED

During the 500-year interval from approximately 1450 to 1950 our world became a visually oriented one The eye became dominant The printing press, and a whole army of copying machines which followed it, completely changed our culture Paper and paper forms were circulated with ever-increasing speed The primitive jungle was replaced by a modern one through which we stumbled and lost our way, a jungle composed of millions of files and boxes, cupboards and cabinets, archives and record-keeping systems We had turned to the printed page in a desperate hope for a better life

The advantages of a writing and reading culture seemed so obvious Now information could be transmitted accurately without undergoing the distortions of an intermediate and frequently biased personality Now the sagest thoughts of man could be perpetuated, and to become a philosopher took on great dignity Now truth and beauty could be preserved for countless generations to come, and surely civilization would quickly be extended to everyone, everywhere No longer would anyone dare to put falsehood and heresy in print Truth would prevail

Printed documents became the underlying basis of both government and law Soon the printed word was woven inextricably into all legal procedure, both in courts and in those assemblies where law was made Its status seemed forever assured

During the first half of the twentieth century serious doubts arose We learned that falsehood and heresy *can* be put in print, Hitler's *Mein Kampf* smashed once and for all the notion that a well-read people is therefore a discriminating or thoughtful one We learned that swindlers, agitators, and racketeers surely must love our typographical culture, for they flourish so well within it Courts everywhere were becoming jammed The brave words of William Ewart Gladstone that "Justice delayed is

justice denied" became a mockery Nearly all justice, such as it was, was long delayed Governmental directives and documents became overwhelming, and men everywhere began to feel suffocated by "red tape"

In 1950 William H Whyte's book plaintively asking *Is Anybody Listening?* appeared and was widely read and discussed He showed us how swamped we had become by too much written communication, he carefully developed the thesis that "The greatest enemy of communication is the illusion of it" For example, just because we have sent a man a memorandum is no assurance that he has received our message His book was followed by a whole series of similar treatises, and soon the extremes to which we had gone became distinctly frightening Let us examine the picture in detail

MID-CENTURY BREAKDOWN IN COMMUNICATION

By 1950 the sum total of human knowledge had in itself thrown enormous pressure upon Western culture, and a process inherently a part of that culture seemed at fault The process is called "transmitting the cultural heritage," and to understand its origin and growth is necessary if we are to put mid century events in proper perspective

Many thousands of years ago some deep thinker must have come up with an enormously important idea "Why not teach my son," he thought, "all the things I have learned throughout my lifetime? Perhaps I can pass along to the boy in a very short time, if he will but listen to me, the knowledge that has taken me many years to obtain His chances to survive will surely be thus increased, and perhaps in his later years he will have time to learn some things his parents never learned"

Our ancient ancestor put his idea into action and somehow persuaded his neighbors and relatives to follow suit In time the practice became almost universal

Certainly, in some such fashion must the whole concept of transmitting our cultural heritage to the oncoming generation have had its birth What a tremendous impact it has had upon civilized man More than any other one factor we can name, it has doubtless been responsible for building the high standard of living we presently enjoy Without repeatedly gained intervals of time for thinking and planning, the tools and the machines as well as the comforts and conveniences of modern life would never have been attained

One reason that the system worked so well was that in the beginning there was very little to be taught and to be learned Human

knowledge was extremely limited, and the problem of transmitting the cultural heritage to the young was relatively simple In early society, for instance, a father might be much concerned about teaching his son where the best grass grew, where clear water could be found, how to handle the sheep dog, when and how to shear the sheep, and most importantly, how to wield effectively a long staff or pole in driving off the saber-toothed tiger which occasionally attacked the flock, killing many of the animals Educators eventually came to call such a course of study "The Saber-Tooth Curriculum" Up until the time of Christ, fathers and mothers found but little real difficulty in passing on their accumulated store of knowledge to their children But at about the year 1 something began to happen to man's cultural heritage

Snowballing Knowledge Outstrips the Transmitting Media

At the time of Christ, the sum total of human knowledge may best be represented as a tiny snowball resting at the top of a long, gentle mountain slope covered with a soft, wet blanket of snow In the year 1 somebody gave the little snowball a nudge and it started to roll down the gentle slope It took 1,750 years for that snowball to double in weight and complexity By the year 1750 man knew twice as much as he had known in the days of Christ

About 1750 our snowball suddenly began to pick up speed Spurred perhaps by the Industrial Revolution, man's store of knowledge began to increase at a very dramatic pace It took only 150 years for it to redouble in weight and complexity By 1900 our snowball had a factor of four attached to it

The rate of increase kept mounting Within a period of only 50 additional years man's total knowledge had redoubled, by 1950 it had a factor of eight attached to it In less than a decade it had redoubled a third time and the growth factor had become one of sixteen Shortly after 1950 the problem became all too clear We had some sixteen times as much to be taught and to be learned as had been true at the time of Christ, and we certainly had *not* multiplied our communication and learning skills proportionately None could honestly argue that he could read, write, speak, and listen with sixteen times the efficiency of Aristotle, Plato, or Christ Actually, despite the fact that many professional communicators (schoolteachers) had been hired to help us with the task, by 1950 it appeared that the whole process of transmitting our cultural heritage was fast breaking down

Even a generation or so earlier the problem had not seemed so

overwhelming. In the early 1920's, for example, life was not complicated for a boy living on a midwestern farm. A father taught his son how to hitch up the mules, how to milk a cow, and how to keep the point of a walking plow beneath the surface of the ground when plowing a furrow. Perhaps he took his boy into the tool shed and talked very seriously about certain biological processes. Having finished, he breathed a heavy sigh of relief, made certain that he had been understood, turned away and walked out of the shed. No doubt, he felt at that moment that he had completed transmitting the cultural heritage to his boy, that he had taught him all the things it was necessary for him to know during his life. It was a kind of saber-toothed curriculum brought down to the 1920's.

Actually, he missed the boat pretty badly. His son has not hitched up a team of mules or milked a cow or plowed a furrow in over 40 years. At that, *our* fathers did a lot better by most of us mid-century parents than we have been able to do by our own offspring. It is hard to keep in touch with our children, to understand their talk, to grasp what they will need to know even five years hence. The basic problem is that the weight and complexity of our cultural heritage have been increasing at a geometric ratio no one really understands, and that our communication skills have simply not kept pace. What factors have caused the wide disruption between what we need to learn and our ability to learn it? By asking ourselves three questions, we shall perhaps catch a glimpse of at least part of the answer.

Do we fail to devote enough time to communication? Here, the answer is obviously No. Several studies have revealed that we devote about 70 per cent of all our waking hours to reading, writing, speaking, and listening—the four basic processes of communication.

Are our brains incapable of absorbing what we need to know? Here again the answer appears to be No. It is true that no longer can one person absorb the bulk of all human knowledge and pass it along. The "generalists" in our culture have become fewer and fewer. But the consensus of our neurologists and physiologists is that we make very poor use indeed of the brain cells with which we are blessed. Each of us is equipped with about 11 billion brain cells, an ample supply with which to handle for many future generations our personal needs in a pyramiding cultural heritage. The truth is that presently we are probably making effective use of less than 10 per cent of our mental faculties.

Are our schools failing to provide us with the kind of communication training we most need? To this question we must answer Yes, and without qualification. As a nation we read with the proficiency of a

sixth-grade child, write vast numbers of memoranda with an average "fog index" so high that the meaning is lost in hopeless verbiage, listen with but 25 per cent efficiency to most of the messages we hear, and speak without confidence that we are expressing ourselves adequately or that the recipient of our words will understand what we are trying to say Emphasis in the classroom is still too often upon "correctness" rather than upon communication, upon form rather than upon content, upon style rather than upon understanding, upon preparation for life in a visually oriented culture as we steadily move toward a largely aurally oriented one

DROWNING IN A SEA OF PAPER

By 1950 most business enterprises in America were encountering real problems in communication The shotgun philosophy of the past generation—one relying for communication upon the idea of sprinkling everyone with a carbon copy of everything, whether he needed it or not—had proved disastrous White-collar and professional people were drowning in paper, and brown- and blue-collar folk were floundering, gasping, and wondering if ever the flood would subside Managers could not read even their official directives, diplomats and politicians were unable to tackle their central assignment of building good will, for their entire day was spent trying to assimilate the contents of their in-baskets, and schoolteachers became lost in trying to keep up professionally in even the smaller specialized areas of knowledge University professors, often informed that they must "publish or perish," added to the swelling tide And as the pressure for publication increased, the quality of the resultant product decreased Scholars were continually being forced to write memoranda to one another in an attempt to clarify passages all too obscure in their original form The most striking phenomenon of the half-century had become our memorandum mania, a malady afflicting every stratum of society

Perhaps the whole thing got its start in Terre Haute, Indiana, some 20 years ago The story runs that a manufacturing company there had a breakdown on its assembly line The breakdown, apparently caused by a misunderstood oral instruction, actually threatened to bankrupt the company The Board of Directors immediately went into a protracted session during the course of which the chairman solemnly declared "We may possibly survive this catastrophe, but I'll tell you one thing We'll never survive a recurrence of it We've got to make it impossible for this kind of thing ever to happen in our company again"

They thought and thought, talked and talked, and finally came up with a slogan That slogan was, "Never Say it—Write it" They printed their insane maxim on every memorandum pad in their company and on the top of every letterhead They put it on every bulletin board, in every restroom, in every payroll envelope Wherever an employee turned he was faced with the inane admonition "Never Say it—Write it"

It probably would not have been so bad had two executives from one of the largest industries in the country not happened to be visiting in Terre Haute One of them picked up a letterhead, read the slogan, and showed it to his companion Whereupon they decided to recommend the slogan to their own management, did so, and eventually it was adopted The trend was started Soon thousands of enterprises in this country had followed suit "Never Say it—Write it"

Perhaps it still would not have been so bad if one of the first managers to prepare a memorandum had not taken it to his secretary, saying, "Type this, please"

The girl looked up at him and asked innocently, "How many copies do you want?"

This was a shock It had not occurred to him that he could have more than one But, being a manager, he quickly recovered his wits and replied, "How many can I have?"

"Oh," she said, "you may have five legible carbons without any additional work really It just takes a little more paper"

"Good," he said, as a brain wave hit him "Why not let the boys around here know that I'm on the stick?" Quickly he said, "Send a copy to Martha Williams, one to Joe Walters," and he named off five of his pals in management he would like to let know he was on the ball It still would not have been so bad except that he soon discovered a little duplicator that could be bought for only $70 Now he could produce 50 carbons of every message and let 50 people know that he was on the ball It was still not enough Soon he had a better duplicator! Through it he could run a master copy and come out with hundreds of legible carbons of every idea he got in his lifetime

And for a full generation that is exactly what all of us did We sprinkled one another with carbon copies of reports and memoranda until we were all awash in a flood of paper

FORMS AD INFINITUM

Several years ago a large company in Minnesota circulated copies of its annual report That segment of the report that dealt with communication costs revealed that the company had spent nearly a million and a half dollars for communication during the previous 12 months

One entry was startling. It indicated that the firm had used *3,400 different memorandum forms* for inside-the-firm communication during the previous year! One could but wonder, "How on earth can the human brain ever dream up 3,400 different kinds of memorandum forms?"

Actually, the Minnesota firm turned out to be a piker. Within three weeks a speaker at a national convention in St. Louis had declared that his company—one of the largest in all Missouri—possessed 5,000 different kinds of memorandum forms. He reported that 120 of them had never been used. Another 200 or 300 had been used so infrequently that there was no possible justification for keeping them in inventory. Yet, month after month, his company kept in huge supply 5,000 different kinds of these forms.

But the record was yet to come. Before the year was out, an Air Force Colonel had reported at a national convention that 6,007 different forms are used for inside communication in the U. S. Air Force. He went on to explain how many tons of paper had been bought and how many billions of pages had been printed. Then he got to the key statistic of all. He declared that every year it takes from 50 to 55 million cubic feet of storage space just to store the paper of the U. S. Air Force. He left one wondering, "Where does the Navy put its paper? Where does the Army store its paper?"

But by mid-century it was no longer a joking matter. We were truly drowning in paper. In Jersey City a large plastics company's files were expanding so fast that part of them had to be stored out-of-doors. When the company's parent corporation heard of the fresh-air files, a paper-work survey was ordered for the entire organization. Over 170 tons of paper were scrapped and nearly 3,000 file drawers were emptied. In many cabinets 95 per cent of the written records were found useless. Some were worthless because of age, some had resulted from needless duplication, but the greatest percentage of the abandoned files were papers bearing messages that originally should have been spoken, not written. This case was merely typical of countless others being uncovered by records management experts.

CLERICAL BIRTHRATES

Somebody had to handle all of the paper we were moving around. The people who handle paper for a living are usually called clerks. Now a clerk does not build any new Fords, Chevrolets, or Plymouths. She does not produce any corn, or hogs, or potatoes. She does not really produce anything that can be proved to raise our standard of living, but she does move a lot of paper. Sometimes she files it. Sometimes she retrieves it. Mostly she just circulates it. Back in the year 1900, one out of every 40 people who worked for a living in America was a clerk. By

1940, one out of every ten working people in America was a clerk. And by 1950, one out of every six people on this nation's payrolls was a clerk with one assignment—to move paper around. The birthrate of these people must have been enormous. For 50 years they increased five times faster than any other element in society.

The typical white-collar manager in American industry during the first half of the twentieth century was a small frog in a big puddle. Despite his smallness, every week there came to his desk between 15 and 20 big brown envelopes with contents he did not know how to handle. Typically, our manager would untie the string on the first envelope and pull out the contents. Always it seemed to be some kind of a report—20, 30, sometimes 40 pages thick. He looked at the title on the document, found it unrelated to what he thought he was doing for a living, and was about to toss it into a wastebasket. Suddenly he discovered a little printed sheet stapled at the upper left-hand corner of the first page. One entry on that sheet had been boldly checked in pencil. The entry checked was "For your information." He looked again to see who sent him this report and discovered that it was from his general supervisor. Now he was afraid to throw it away. "The boss thinks I ought to know what's in this thing, does he? Well, I haven't time to read 40 pages now, I'll have to assimilate it later on." Carefully he laid it on the right-hand corner of his desk and opened up the second big brown envelope.

This one was much like the first. It contained a thick document whose title made no sense to our hero. He was about to throw it into a wastebasket when again he found the ubiquitous little sheet stapled to the front page. This time the entry checked said "For your file." There was a problem! His files were already so full of paper that he nearly skinned his knuckles every time he tried to get something in or out of them. With no space left for this thick document, he laid it on top the first, and opened the third brown envelope.

It was like the first two. This time the entry checked said "Usual Procedure." Not knowing what usual procedure was, he stacked the third report on top of the first two and opened the fourth.

The fourth one was quite different. It appeared to be some kind of a questionnaire. Somebody wanted to know something and had filled about 12 pages with question after question. But our manager was alert. He had learned long ago never to fill out a questionnaire. When you fill one out and mail it back to the sender, he is inevitably going to mail you his report later on, and you are not going to know what to do with it. So he stacked the fourth item on top of the other three. Within two weeks the pile usually had reached a foot or more in depth.

One day the whole stack slid off onto the floor. Now a crisis had arisen. He buzzed for his secretary and said, "Mrs. Thomas, will you take this junk out to your office and systematize or organize it some way?"

Unable to suppress a look of disgust, she gathered it up and disappeared

A few hours later she returned and said, "Well, Mr Jones, I think I have this arranged, where do you want me to put it?"

Unable to think of a sensible answer, he heard himself saying, "Just put it in a file"

Always her reply was, "But we have no more file space"

In a moment of petulance, he was likely to snap out "Then requisition another file"

With that reply he was demanding of his company and his fellow workers the profit of $6,500 worth of their goods and services to pay for his new steel file with four drawers in it For that was what was required Worse than that, he was demanding of those same workers another $4,100 worth of their goods and services every year from then till eternity to pay for the operation, maintenance, and storage cost of his new steel file, for that is what was required

THE UNREAD REPORT

The problem of the unread report became the gravest problem in the American economy The work of hundreds of able men was being lost every 24 hours because they were discovering great truths, filing these truths in files from which they never again can be extricated We had accumulated the know-how for doing thousands of things in a better way, but we could no longer synthesize the parts of our own know-how The parts had been lost in files crammed with paper and could no longer be located

Each afternoon at five o'clock our typical manager filled a briefcase full of paper, toted it home, dropped it behind the front door of his house The next morning he would pick it up, and tote it back to the office again Always he felt ten years behind in his work And the reason he could no longer get on top of it was that he could not handle fast enough the paper that flowed through and past him Every year 328,000 new books were being published, 70,000 periodicals were being circulated and sent in his direction He fully recognized that he ought to be reading at least 1 or 2 per cent of all that mass, but no longer could keep up with a tiny fragment of 1 per cent of it And such was the life of the white-collar worker at mid-century

Unbearable Cost of Paper Circulation

By mid-century many of the costs of our mania for paper circulation had become clear Our Federal Government was issuing 100,000

weighty studies per year, supplemented by an additional 450,000 papers and articles Reports from every man, woman, and child in the United States were being required at a cost greater than all the dividends paid by our corporations The Nation's economy included 50 million steel file drawers holding 250 billion pieces of paper, with the total increasing annually The total actual dollar cost of paperwork in the United States economy, according to the best estimate available, had climbed to over 100 billion dollars per year—just about twice the cost of our entire national defense program

In the early 1950's our Nation's leadership turned with some desperation and in wistful hope to electronic computers for an answer to their problems Soon we had some 25,000 of these modern machines in operation and discovered that they could "print out" statistic-laden forms at over 1,000 lines a minute Now it was possible to send out larger numbers of reports and directives The very speed of these machines increased the tide of paperwork already choking all channels of communication Computers were spewing out 7,300 miles of paper a day Copying machines were adding 10 billion pages a year, with the promise that this figure would soon be raised to 25 billion if trends were not changed Our first few years of experience with computers seemed to have proved but one thing *The more paperwork that can be produced, the more paperwork is in fact produced*

Intangible Costs Still Greater

The intangible costs of paperwork as it increasingly clogged and choked our conventional channels of communication were probably much greater than those computed in dollars and cents With so much paper to handle, there was no longer time to think With this many memoranda in circulation, it was quite possible to prove that some of one's colleagues had either broken standard operating procedure, had neglected their duties, or had been guilty of actual falsehoods Personal tensions grew to nearly intolerable heights One executive plaintively wailed that "Because of overautomation, relations between managers have been reduced to haggling over the correctness of the voluminous detail in a tabulating card run"

Several important investigations of the intangible costs of paperwork were published They tended to point to the same conclusions An important one by David Bushnell and William Wood relating to companies relying heavily upon formal written statements to spell out company policy revealed the following results

1 Such statements do not get the job done
2 They raise more questions than are answered
3 They discourage individual initiative in carrying out the policy
4 They stifle upward communication
5 They build resistance to new ways of doing things
6 They cause dissatisfaction and serious misunderstanding among 75 per cent of the managers affected
7 Face-to face discussion is needed

Such evidence is rather well summarized in the words of Robert W Pullen, president of Public Savings Life Insurance, when he declares "The manager who has to say it all in writing either doesn't care to make himself fully understood, or can't"

Although direct cause-and-effect relationships were hard to establish, there were deepening suspicions that communication breakdowns were partly responsible for business failures By mid-century, from a rather steady rate of 4 per cent mortality among American business enterprises per year, the pace had stepped up to a frightening 10 per cent per year (A part of this increase of business mortality was traceable to mergers, but not all of it) Meanwhile, Dun & Bradstreet reports have been indicating that some 90 per cent of all business failures are due to "bad management" Nearly every business leader began to ask himself "What *is* management?"

The most commonly arrived at answer always strongly involved communication Lawrence Appley, president of the American Management Association, put it bluntly "Management," he said, "is simply the business of getting other people to do the things that must be done" It required little shrewdness to realize that to get others to do the things that must be done, it is imperative that we keep in communication with them What is written on the job must be read, referred to, and remembered, or we have a product not worth the postage stamp to carry it or the space to file it

Our growing distrust of written correspondence was underlined by a widely circularized report that a junior executive at the New York headquarters of a major oil company had made a standing bet with his colleagues "Write a letter," he said, "and send it through the regular, routine company channels to any of our offices in the country As you start dictating, give me the idea you want to communicate, and with a good saddle horse I bet I can deliver it to the recipient before your correspondence does" No one accepted the bet Too many company letters have consumed a couple of weeks meandering across the country from one paper handler to another, each delaying the message until he "has time to read it" and add some written comments

By 1960 it became increasingly clear that the Gutenberg era had drawn to an end For 500 years we had been living in a predominantly visual and typographical culture, but now evidences of change toward an oral-aural culture were apparent in all areas Perhaps the arrival of the electronic computer was the final signal Dr Jerome B Wiesner, dean of science at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, has called its development one of the turning points in history Although at first it had seemed merely to produce more paperwork, it soon took on more promising aspects Let us consider its evolution along with other evidences of change

TURNING TO SPEECH-COMMUNICATION

By 1960 most forward-looking companies had begun to alter their systems—and indeed their philosophy—of communication One giant corporation dropped the "Never Say it—Write it" slogan, and replaced it with "Talk it over—Jot it down" Others followed suit A moratorium on written reports was ordered by New York City's superintendent of public schools "The number of unnecessary—and often unread—reports is beyond belief," he explained A few industrial leaders remembered Francis Bacon's warning that "It is generally better to deal by speech than by letter", and the words of Isocrates who declared that "None of the things that are done with intelligence are done without the aid of speech"

By this time even some ~~relatively timid~~ industrial leaders were replacing clerical help with computers, copying machines with auditory media for communication The more verbal ones were openly observing that if yesterday's way of conveying information, policies, and purposes is not today's, today's will scarcely be tomorrow's They were not arguing that paperwork per se is wrong None denied that it has an extremely important role—where, for example, complicated, hard-to-retain facts must be carefully transmitted and preserved But paper is seldom the right medium for the communication of action, the "getting-things-done" types of messages that revolve the wheels of industry. In today's rapidly paced business world, written communication is the slowest, most expensive, and frequently the least effective means of transmitting information The written word faced mounting competition and was giving ground

Our bolder leaders were busily discovering Wide Area Telephone Service and the dividends it could pay Managers everywhere awoke to the fact that talking is usually the most economical way to transmit business information For instance, one can make a coast-to-coast, three-

minute phone call (about 350 words, which exceeds the number on most typewritten pages) for not much more than the cost of producing a letter and sending it across an office Today's average piece of business correspondence, processed and transmitted, costs about $2 35 (The total range of costs of handling a single letter runs from $1 98 to over $5 00 per unit This cost includes the cost of the typist's time, but not the cost of the manager's or dictator's time) But the man who phones, if he handles himself well, can send and receive far more information and develop a higher degree of understanding than he can had he employed a whole series of written communications

Electronic computers, it is being discovered, can make great contributions to our reoriented culture Already computer-run "talking typewriters" are being used to teach three-year-olds to read, write, and type "Teaching machines" are still experimental and expensive, but they are well on the way A whole army of electronic devices insuring greater reliance upon sound and sound stimuli will soon be in common use

Each day a new set of oral symbols somewhere replaces a former set of visual ones The ear is quicker, more sensitive, and more perceptive than the eye Thus, for example, oral signals are replacing visual ones in the cockpits of our jet planes Grammar is slowly giving way to linguistics Radio, the telephone, jet plane travel permitting face-to-face conferences, voice typewriters, tempo regulators, television, and earth satellites are all giving impetus to our drift toward an aural culture

Distrust of Speech Disappearing

As these changes take place, our inner distrust of oral communication is rapidly disappearing We now recognize that in addition to speed and economy, good speech-communication has several other important advantages as a medium of business discourse It has the advantage of give-and-take, which, if properly used, results in more accuracy and less confusion The sender can get an immediate check on his reception (by such questions as, "Do you understand?") and act promptly if there is a need

A time pressure goes with speech that seldom exists with writing The talker is witness to his listener's piques and pleasures in an active situation, this in itself is often motivation for saying things clearly and concisely The office writer, lacking this pressure, may bury the crucial points in poor rhetoric without the guiding benefit of his reader's scorn as the latter culls for the message

The timing of speech-communication can be critically controlled to a degree not possible in written discourse Again, the face-to-face situa-

tion gives the talker clues for determining the proper instant to pursue his point Written messages can be disastrously timed, they run the risk of reception at exactly the wrong moment

In the art of persuasion, a written plea seldom compares favorably with a spoken one For print on paper to win what it asks of a reluctant recipient requires the talents of a master writer But the average person, though inept at writing, can often be adept at spoken persuasion A spoken plea may add to the words the persuasive power of gestures, facial expressions, laughs, and moans Furthermore, as the expert in selling will testify, it is far more difficult to say "No!" to a person's oral request than it is to reject the same words written on a cold, impersonal piece of paper

Perhaps the most dramatic evidence on how the American public had lost faith in the printed word and was gaining faith in the spoken one came in the form of published surveys on this issue The first survey appeared in 1962 and was later corroborated by several others Comparing the confidence of the public in our four great mass media for communication, the survey revealed that 28 per cent of Americans are least likely to believe what they read in newspapers, 25 per cent least likely to believe what they read in magazine articles, 9 per cent least likely to believe what they hear by radio, and only 7 per cent least likely to believe what they hear on television broadcasts These statistics indicate that by 1960 we had definitely begun to rely more upon speech-communication than upon the printed media This trend was showing up in the results of political elections, in social reform, in entertainment, and most of all in the business economy

Putting the Spoken Word to Work

To exploit the advantages offered by more reliance on the spoken word, the National Records Management Council, along with other groups studying business procedures, has admonished management to "stress information not pieces of paper" Improvement has already been made in many firms Lengthy written reports on company activities have been replaced by oral exposition combined with visual aids Recorded information on tapes or dictating disks is mailed directly to recipients, who listen to, rather than read, the messages In some industries, routine daily information—formerly written, reproduced, and distributed—now is spoken into a recording device connected to the telephone system, by dialing a prearranged number, anyone can listen to the reports

One large corporation uses such a phone information program

with taped messages of approximately five-minute duration Its purpose is to get information about the company and related industry to management people *before* they hear it from outside sources Obviously, calls are not limited to management personnel because the system receives 3,400 calls per day, a total of a million calls a year

One management consultant advises clients to set up "information centers," staffed by trained archivists, to replace central files Material is obtained by telephone from an archivist who has become an expert on the rapid, efficient locating and oral reporting of facts about his firm Such a system, the consultant points out, saves time, energy, and money by eliminating messenger trips and checking procedures Fewer records are mislaid or lost Executives avoid littering their desks with useless, confusing piles of paper But most important of all in this age of speed, management learns what it wants to know when the facts are needed, not hours later

In the future our oral-aural media for teaching and learning are inevitably going to play larger roles Effective communication demands a continual adaptation of our techniques, our media, and our training to our changing cultural needs We are confident that a vastly increased emphasis upon spoken communication will be made an integral part of every school curriculum

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Speech Communication in the Organizational Context

THE CASE OF INFORMATION SYSTEMS, INC

CHAPTER 2

Two months after Information Systems, Inc moved to its new multimillion-dollar home office after years of being housed in an old four-story building in the center of town, five members of the procurement section resigned President Herbert Moyers held a special meeting to deal with the crisis Present were Bill Johnson, manager of the procurement section, Henry Wolfson, Bill's immediate superior, and the five disgruntled buyers

President Moyers began the meeting by taking off his coat and loosening his tie The men looked at one another with some surprise They had never known the old man to open a meeting that way before Moyers looked around the plush surroundings of his newly decorated board room and said, "I am deeply concerned about what is happening in the purchasing area Now, I know we have a good manager in Bill Johnson and I know we have an able group of men for buyers I want you to forget that I am president of the company and let's get this thing aired out You men who have resigned have no reason to hold anything back, and I hope we can bring everything out here on the table, and if we do maybe we can iron things out I'd like to see you men reconsider your resignations Every one of you I mean that"

There was a long painful silence as the five buyers slipped down

lower in the upholstered chairs around the big shiny table They looked at the heavy carpet on the floor and at the portrait of President Moyers on the wall and were silent Again the president tried to get some response Tension mounted Finally, Harry Rider, who had been the ringleader behind the resignations, stood up and blurted out, "All right, I'll tell you what's wrong Nobody tells anybody anything around here We did not know until the ground was already broken that our desks—I can't say 'offices'—were to be in a bullpen like that"

"But certainly your facilities are much better than they were in the old plant," the president said

"They are not You can't do any work here There's too much noise"

"The entire building is acoustically designed for low noise levels"

"Yeah, well you haven't tried working out there There's no privacy"

"We have the conference rooms"

"They aren't available when you need them Not only that, but you have to sign up for them and then take the group into a room away from your desk That old way where we could meet right in our office was much better"

"How do the rest of you feel about it?" the president asked

Gradually the built-up resentment boiled over and the story was repeated They were unable to work in the present conditions It was bad enough trying to deal with engineers without having to go through all the red tape of signing up for and scheduling a meeting room

George Nelson finally said, "Let me give you an example Just Monday I was supposed to have a meeting with the vice-president of Norton's Tool and Die and their engineer and their salesman When they got hung up over Chicago they came in an hour late and I couldn't find a meeting room available Now there I am Can I hold that meeting out in the bullpen?" Then fairly shouting with anger, George said, "You know what I finally did? Pete Wilson is the engineer who provides my specs He invited us to his office over across the building And we met in *his* office!"

"I bet you really had control of that meeting, didn't you," Harry said, "after demonstrating to that VP from Norton's that your own company treated you like a flunky"

"What do you mean by that crack?" Henry Wolfson asked

"I just mean that I'm supposed to be in charge of buying certain items around here and I'm supposed to call and control these meetings and half the time the engineers have already made the decisions"

This brought the president to his feet and he demanded a further explanation

"Simple enough," Harry said, "I don't blame the slide-rule boys They want to build a new model so they sketch in the general design and then they call up a buddy who is an engineer for some vendor in the area and he draws up the specs for them That way they can farm out half their work 'Course when the time comes to let the contract these two guys have got the thing in the bag I might just as well not bother to even put it out for bids"

"This is incredible," the president said "We stopped this practice a year ago As a matter of fact," he turned to Henry, "I gave you a specific responsibility to cut that practice completely when I established your division Why wasn't I informed?"

"I didn't know myself," Henry said, mopping his brow "I told them this practice was absolutely forbidden"

"Yeah," said Harry, "but did you tell them over in Research and Development?"

"Let's face it," said Bill, "nobody tells those engineers anything unless he's got that engineering degree That's one of the troubles around here"

The incident related above suggests a faltering operation, a business so beset with difficulties that profits were low and expansion was grinding to a screeching halt Such was not the case To understand the significance of the dialogue just read, we must background the incident with relevant context

Information Systems grew so rapidly that most organizational changes happened as a result of the need for more personnel to deal with more diversified and specialized tasks The company was continually preoccupied with the pressing problems of fighting first for a toehold in the very competitive electronics industry and then delivering and expanding their product lines Management never found time to rationalize organizational structure and procedures

Originally Information Systems manufactured only one item—a small, efficient, and inexpensive data-processing system There were few employees and many of them did several jobs When the company decided to increase its line, the engineers who were developing new products tended to take their subcontracting problems to other engineers in small machining companies in the area These men would then design the component and thus enable the Information Systems engineers to concentrate on the overall development of the equipment

Information Systems was an amazingly successful firm Within five years it had become a multimillion-dollar organization As a result, the additional personnel required were added very rapidly In some months as many as 30 per cent more people were added to the company roster The new people were given a hasty orientation to their work and after

a short interval—often less than a year—some were appointed to supervisory positions Under these conditions most lower management people felt insecure The problem was particularly crucial in the new division of buyers, established eight months before the move to the new headquarters building The duties connected with subcontracting for component parts had become so time-consuming that the development engineers complained and excused some of their inability to meet target dates on that basis Top management decided to establish a division of buyers modeled after the practice of several of the giant electronics firms in the area This decision was reached after a thorough analysis by a management consultant firm

The new division was to have the exclusive responsibility of making all purchases for the company Everything from erasers and letterheads to the most complicated electronic component was to be purchased by the new procurement division The typical procedure for large purchases was as follows A buyer would first get the expert advice of an engineer, in regard to the specifications for the part to be purchased, and would then contact several firms to negotiate the purchase price, quality requirements, delivery rates, and so forth The buyer often conducted the final negotiation session at the head office of Information Systems in the presence of one or more engineers from Research and Development, the salesman for the vendor, and an engineer, or, on occasion, an officer from the firm seeking the contract

At the former offices the buying division was housed in a large open area, partitioned in such a way that each buyer had his desk in an office area 8 by 10 feet His secretary's desk was located in the open passageway separating the rows of partitioned offices The buyers held smaller conferences in these offices, for larger meetings they had two big conference rooms at their disposal

The architects for the new building designed a separate area especially for the buying division It consisted of a large open bullpen, airy, well-lighted, and spacious, for the buyers and their secretaries Each buyer's desk and that of his secretary were side by side, and the acoustics assured a low noise level A series of small meeting rooms and several larger ones bordered the bullpen area. The buyers scheduled their meetings in these rooms

After the architectural plans were approved and the building underway, several consultations between representatives from the buyers, the interior decorators, and the architect were held to determine the buyers' wishes At first the buyers expressed enthusiasm about moving into the spacious new building and were eager to offer suggestions to their representatives about furnishing detail. But then word spread that the

engineers who worked most closely with the buyers were to have individual offices measuring 10 by 12 feet A number of disgruntled buyers got together and requested a meeting with Bill Johnson, their departmental manager At the meeting they expressed their concern about the new arrangement They suggested that Bill try to get the architect to provide them with at *least* the equivalent of the individual offices they had in the old office building Bill was most reluctant to do so but finally agreed When he approached his immediate superior, Henry Wolfson, he did so with considerable reluctance, since Wolfson habitually told him that he was an extremely busy man

When Bill gingerly broached the subject of adding offices to the new plans, Wolfson immedately vetoed the idea He insisted that it was much too late and that the buyers had known about the new building for months Since construction was well underway, they could not possibly change design at this late date

Bill was offended not so much by Wolfson's words as by his manner Bill definitely got the impression that Wolfson thought he was a sorehead and should keep his mouth shut Bill was so irritated by his reception that he told his boss that he did not feel that the men in his division had been given enough information about the new quarters and that they had not been consulted sufficiently in the planning stages

Bill had interrupted Wolfson in the midst of a crisis over delay in the delivery of an important installation Wolfson had been hearing charges from the production men all morning and he was frustrated by an apparently insoluble problem when he worked Bill into his schedule When Bill blew up and talked to him in a completely uncharacteristic way Wolfson got up and began to pace the room He said that while they were on the subject of Bill's division he might mention that he had been getting a lot of heat from the other sections because the buyers were not doing their jobs properly Both Research and Development and Engineering had complained about the unnecessary delay in getting parts and materials

Bill left the meeting shaking and sweating He had never talked to Wolfson in this fashion before, nor had he ever gotten a dressing down like that before He called his men into an emergency meeting immediately During the course of the meeting he lost his temper, defended the decision of top management not to change the plans for the new quarters, and told his men that he was under a great deal of pressure from top management because of delays in procurement During this same meeting Bill decided that Harry Rider would have to go Not only was Rider a sorehead and troublemaker, but he was very influential with the men They seemed to follow his lead in the matter under discussion,

and when Harry said that he was not satisfied with Bill's answer and that the buyers should not take this thing lying down but should fight for their rights, he was supported by the men

Buyer resentment mounted over the next few months and they made their move to the new offices, however, accumulated tension erupted finally when George Nelson had to schedule his meeting in the office of an engineer When George and Harry and three others went to Bill with the suggestion that office partitions be erected in the area and were turned down they resigned

The case of "buyer's rebellion" in Information Systems illustrates a typical long, slow buildup of a serious organizational problem that is identified *for the first time* when a costly explosion occurs We are not going to attempt to explain all the factors that contributed to the crisis in the procurement division of this firm As you read this and later chapters, turn back, and many reasons for puzzling bits of behavior in this narrative will become apparent For the present we advance a simple summary generalization *The problems of* INFORMATION SYSTEMS *were caused, predominantly, by management's failure to communicate effectively*

The Organization as a Message-Processing System

The modern organization is a message-processing system A table of organization is an anatomical drawing that indicates the formal channel through which flow official and unofficial messages Around the formal structure is an ever-changing and complicated network of informal communication channels Through these veins flows the information that achieves a community of understanding to provide objectives, divide the work, develop morale, evaluate performance, and mobilize the resources of the organization If the circulation of messages is good and the level of understanding high, the organization will be more effective

Within the formal divisions, departments, projects, and units of an organization—whether it be governmental, commercial, industrial, scientific, educational, or religious—there are supervisors who must organize and divide the work for their people These supervisors do not manhandle their subordinates and push them around Supervision consists primarily of speaking and listening

The smaller units within an organization are gathered together in larger clusters, and middle management divides the work of these larger units The middle manager, too, must rely on speech-communi-

cation to do much of his job Finally, all the parts of the organization must mesh together and upper management must organize the work of all and bring the resources of the total organization to bear upon the outside world How well the organization meets the challenges posed by competition of similar groups and the pressures of other organizations is largely determined by the skill with which the total group handles information

By 1950 our society had become so complex that the everyday citizen as well as the industrial leader had in a very real sense become a manager Almost everyone today has management responsibilities of one kind or another Some of us function as amateurs in the business of management, others become highly professional But all depend heavily upon speech-communication in even their routine functions Each day is filled with appointments, interviews, conferences, and meetings

Within an organization a substantial part of our communication is for the purpose of keeping the operation on an even keel But balance is seldom maintained for very long Events are always disrupting operations Pressures from competition or from other forces within or without challenge the organization to develop new working methods Leaders must devote some of their communicating to changing the attitudes and actions of the personnel in their organization They must bring their people to the point of accepting change Becoming an agent of change requires that the leader have a clear understanding of the problem, that he sees new ways to meet the problem, and that his solution to the problem is effective in achieving the organization's objective In addition, he must communicate with people in the organization in such a way that they are led to cooperate willingly with changes in their routines In other words, change implies uncertainty It causes each individual to doubt whether or not he and his organization will succeed in the new set of circumstances

Every communication situation poses a challenge to those involved in it Too often we face those challenges without thinking, relying on our habitual patterns of communication to help us to muddle through Yet, every organizational setting provides an opportunity for vital choices in deciding how best to achieve results from our communicating The possibility of choice creates the opportunity for rational decisions, the development of skills and competence, and the conscious attainment of effectiveness

If we are to deal effectively with speech-communication in the modern organization, we must understand both the process of speech-communication and the organizational structure that furnishes its context Our first task, therefore, is to describe the basic process of speech-communication and then investigate the interplay of organizational

structure and human relationships that determine how messages are processed

The Process of Speech-Communication

Most of us think of talking to another human being as an elementary, mechanical operation We put an idea into vocalized words, the other person picks up the message and is thereby informed Visualizing the sending and receiving of spoken messages in this fashion seems sensible but amounts to a drastic and deceptive oversimplification The necessary further dimensions of the act of spoken communication can be seen in a model that represents *purposeful* use of speech from the point of view of the man with the message, the speaker We wish to make clear that this is a PRESCRIPTIVE model, one that suggests what ought to be planned and implemented for optimum results While the model is source-oriented, it may be said to be receiver-centered

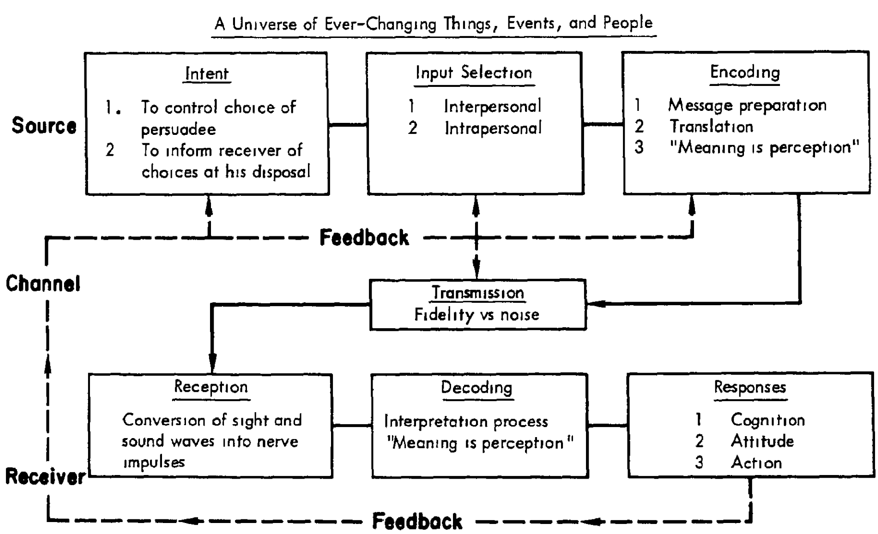

Figure 1 Model of the Communication Process

First let us look at the parts of our model in Figure 1 and their relations to each other In the left margin are the three physical components involved in an act of communication, the SOURCE (speaker), the CHANNEL (speaking directly to the listeners with or without eye contact, public address system, telephone, radio, TV, and so forth), and the RECEIVER (the individual or group that is to hear the message and whose behavior or attitude is to be modified)

THE SOURCE

The direction of the solid arrows indicates both time sequence and the direction of development and movement of the message Events in the "universe of ever-changing things, events and people" bring to the conscious mind of the communicator a need to communicate Changing conditions produce stimuli that necessitate reinforcement of an existing purpose, or creation of a new purpose The source begins the process of communicating by identifying an INTENT in the form of a statement of what he wishes to accomplish by the message This purpose is as definite as he can make it, considering the situation, the person or persons who will receive it, and their attitudes, knowledge, and capabilities If he wishes to produce an action response, his INTENT can be stated specifically in terms of desired terminal behavior (what he wants them to do)

INPUT SELECTION

Once his purpose is clear, the speaker plans the "inputs" for his message He must make at least two strategy decisions how he will transmit his message by light, sound, or electronic waves or telephone lines to his listener, and how his message will be conveyed from the ear and eye of the receiver to the audience member's centers of response and understanding The first elements of input we will call *interpersonal* The second series is *intrapersonal* Interpersonally, a message source will choose among media He may prefer to talk face-to-face, or use the telephone, or he may decide that this message can be best transmitted by radio, intercom system, or open- or closed-circuit television He may go through formal channels or he may choose informal communication networks If he decides to use a two-person or small group situation, he must decide how formal his structure of interpersonal interaction should be For example, should he call a meeting in the board room or arrange a golf game? With telephone or intercom, should he plan to talk with the individuals separately or use a conference call?

Intrapersonally, he should make a choice that is not as obvious but is equally real and, perhaps, even more important Human beings can be reached with messages that produce response through their critical faculties or via their conditioned responses (habits) In a present instance, does the speaker prefer to have his receivers deliberate about the facts of the case, about his recommendations, or would he consider it more effective to bypass critical responses to a large degree and settle for more automated, routine reactions? If he chooses the first, he has selected the intrapersonal input of *reasoned discourse* If he decides upon the

second, he has chosen to use the input leading to uncritical response we term *suggestion* (Chapter 14 is devoted to the use of these different intrapersonal inputs in communication)

ENCODING

Never forgetting the unique individuals to whom he will speak, and being guided by his INTENT and choice of interpersonal and intrapersonal CONTEXT, the speaker ENCODES his message He plans the main and supporting points he will make, the facts and illustrations he will use, and the language that will be most meaningful to his listeners He adjusts to time limitations Ordinarily, all encoding is tentative, amounting to a list of possibilities that the speaker can draw upon and rearrange during transmission Only in the exceptional case does he write out the complete message, for he recognizes the rigidity a script imposes upon source output, as well as his own inability to predict precisely how well his listeners will understand him and how soon they will be ready to advance from point to point

The "man with the message" is guided by two utilitarian concepts the notion that he is *translating,* and the realization that whatever he wishes to send to another person is limited by the most basic empirical principle of communication, *meaning is perception* Because his listener attaches his own meanings to words of the source, the sender must translate what he would communicate into what the receiver knows or is interested in This is often as significant a change in the message as putting it into Chinese And when his message is decoded, all results depend upon what the listener perceives, the meaning he thinks is there, no matter what the source intended Thus selection of language and content in encoding are shaped largely by considerations of translation into terms the receiver is likely to interpret in predictable perceptions

TRANSMISSION

The message becomes an event during TRANSMISSION Sounds and visual stimuli are emitted by the speaker, and via selected channels either or both are conveyed to the receiver(s) The speaker's main concern is with "high fidelity" TRANSMISSION If TRANSMISSION delivers to the receiver stimuli below the threshold of his sensory acuities, i e, signals he is unable to see and hear clearly, distortions occur and *intelligibility* is lowered Fidelity has deteriorated Obviously, to the extent that fidelity is inadequate, communication fails

A major problem in TRANSMISSION is noise *Noise* is any physical or psychological distraction at the time of transmission that reduces the

ability of the receiver to get the message Speakers should assign a high priority to the control or elimination of *noise*

THE RECEIVER

The RECEIVER includes three discrete functions of message reception Each function poses a different problem for the communicator RECEPTION is satisfactory when a faithful copy of the source stimuli-pattern enters the nervous system of the listener (If a source says "Wash out the lazy workers," and the receiver hears "Watch out for the daisy workers" the reception is poor) RECEPTION depends upon the availability of above-threshold, high fidelity sights and sounds, plus properly functioning eyes and ears, plus the attention of the receiver on the message

DECODING takes place in the brain of the receiver Nervous impulses trigger habit and thinking activities necessary to the creation of meaning When meanings are attached to sights and sounds received from a source, the listener has perceived the message This fact accounts for the somewhat perplexing truism that "meaning lies not in the word, but in the mind of the hearer " Thus, the manager who hears his boss say, "Watch out for the daisy workers" and perceives that the meaning he attached to that sentence makes absolutely no sense in the context of the situation is likely to ask for clarification

Only after meaning is developed is RESPONSE possible If we respond to the meaning resulting from a unit of communication either by changing our opinion or by believing a controversial statement even more firmly than before, our response is one of *attitude* If we do something we would not have done in the absence of the communication, our response is *action* Change in attitude and action often indicates the impact of communication

But much effective communication produces negligible attitude or action response Information may be assimilated and understandings increased without the listener modifying any opinions or doing anything about it *Cognition* refers to the acquisition of knowledge, the discovery of insights, and the extension of awareness Cognition in and of itself is often a desired response of organizational speech-communication

FEEDBACK

FEEDBACK, represented in Figure 1 by the long, broken arrow connecting RESPONSE to INTENT, INPUTS, ENCODING, and TRANSMISSION, consists of collecting information about the receiver's reactions to the message and using that information to modify a current or subsequent message to make it more effective "Feedback" is a term borrowed for our

model from modern control systems A simple example is furnished by the thermostat that controls the level of temperature in the room Someone decides upon the desired level of temperature (intent) and sets the thermostat at that level The thermostat takes a continuous reading on the actual level and feeds the information back to the furnace when the temperature departs from the desired level This information causes the furnace to modify its behavior and turn off or on depending upon the information it receives from the thermostat In this way the actual level of the temperature is brought on target to approximate the desired level In the same way, the source of a message should take a reading on its effect on the receiver and modify subsequent stimuli

In speech-communication almost continuous FEEDBACK is possible and desirable The speaker can never know enough about the moment-to-moment reactions of his audience Consequently, he becomes a "feedback detective," sensitive to all clues that tell him how his listeners are reacting

Along with continuous monitoring of the receiver(s) comes equally continuous modification of the message Even the INTENT, what the speaker thought he could accomplish, may need to be revised in light of receiver reactions The context, encoding, and transmission operations, all are candidates for change to better meet the current needs of particular listeners

Delayed feedback, collecting information about response after the communication is complete, is useful to the planning of future messages, but too late to help a given communication event Obviously, building continuous feedback mechanisms into a unit of communication becomes exceedingly important

Our entire source-oriented process of communication is enclosed in a *Universe of Ever-Changing Things, Events and People* This reminds us that the human and inanimate contexts of communication are never twice the same, that communication is an extraordinarily contingent phenomenon, and that which comes before and after an act of communication may profoundly influence its outcome

Our model of the process of speech-communication is necessary because it makes explicit all of the significant variables and shows their interrelationships The able practitioner of the process accounts for every element of the model in his planning During the communication event he modifies various elements appropriately through continuous feedback When communication fails he uses the model as an aid to diagnosis of the trouble Usually one or two elements in the model will account for much of the failure. He can then modify his strategy for the next effort to correct the malfunctions and thus avoid repeating his mistakes Occasionally the student of speech-communication will use

the model to evaluate his successes not only for the personal gratification he receives from a good job but also because he can learn from success as well as from failure

Our model of the process of speech-communication is a very general one and can be used to study a host of communication situations within as well as outside organizational settings Now we must place the model within the context of the complicated message-processing system of the modern organization When two members of an organization speak to one another, the very fact that they are members of a common structure influences the sending and receiving of messages, the fidelity of transmission, the perception that gives meaning to the message, and the cognitions that result The organization also provides conditions that facilitate or impede feedback

It may facilitate communication when two people are members of the same organization Their shared experience in similar communicative situations often insures accurate reception of messages If a person expects the message on the intercom to relate to the committee meeting, he is likely to decipher the words "Committee moved to room eight" properly rather than to receive them as "Committee moved to ruminate "

In the same fashion, a common jargon may standardize the meanings associated with certain terms so that the perception of the message is close to intent The use of letters of the alphabet to designate groups within the organization, or different product lines, illustrates one such practice In short, some of the organization's habits and traditions increase the fidelity of message transmission and promote effective feedback

A number of factors in organizations inhibit communication, and these organizational barriers should be understood To do so we need to examine both the anatomy and physiology of organizations Anatomy separates the parts (organs) and discovers their position, relations, structure, and functions Physiology, on the other hand, deals with the processes and dynamic interactions associated with the life of the organism It relates to the various organs as they do their work in cooperation with all the other parts of the body

The Structure of the Modern Organization

Modern organizations have certain similarities whether they are concerned with the production of a product for profit, with the conduct of governmental business, with charitable enterprises, with the education of students, with the treatment of the ill, or with the defense of a country Every manager must see that objectives are set, work clarified,

performance reviewed, and problems solved The manager's problems and the skills he needs to meet them remain essentially the same, thus it is not surprising that a successful army general often becomes a successful corporation president or that a successful corporation president often becomes a productive official of the Federal Government

FORMAL ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

What are the essential features that most organizations have in common? Organizations typically have a *formal* division of labor, authority, and responsibility, associated with the division of labor they have a *formal* division of status and prestige Both sets of formal divisions are reflected in a hierarchical structure That is, not only is the labor divided but some of the labor is formally judged to be more important to the organization, and hence is given a higher or more important place in the structure

Figure 2 presents a typical anatomical diagram of the formal structure of an organization Each block represents a *formal position* within the organization The size and position of the block indicate its relative place in the hierarchy The larger the block and the closer to the top of the diagram, the more important and influential the position, regardless of the abilities of the individual who might, at a given moment, be occupying it Blocks of the same size and the same level of the diagram are judged equal in prestige, status, and importance The anatomy of a typical organization also includes a formal specification of the share of the labor, responsibilities, and authority assigned to each position

The blocks in Figure 2 are connected with heavy black lines that indicate not only who works for whom but also who reports to whom, who gets directions and orders from whom, in short, these lines indicate the formal channels set up by the structure to guide the flow of messages Typically, a person in a block at the third level (e g , C) is not allowed by the formal structure to talk about official matters to the top man (A) Rather, the person is supposed to go "through channels" and transmit official messages through his immediate superior (B) to upper management Sending messages through channels assures that the man at position B is informed of developments in his unit

THE HUMAN FACTOR

When one studies the diagram of the structure of an institution he learns something about its operation and about the communication patterns that accompany its function Yet it is one thing to study the anatomy of the heart, and another to study a given individual and dis-

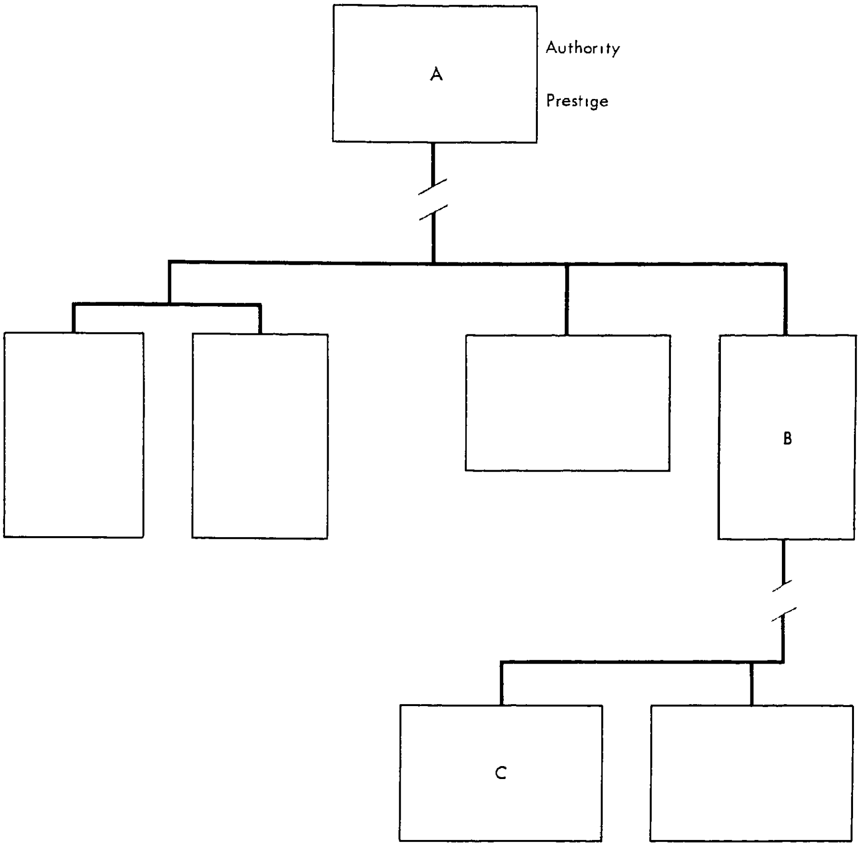

Figure 2 Formal Organizational Structure

cover the way *his* heart functions, for it must be considered that he will have a unique history and hereditary background Variables such as age, as well as the health, activity, and condition of other organs, will affect the functioning of the heart Similarly, when an organization's formal structure is activated by a given complement of people, a new dimension is evident

Figure 3 shows the addition of the human element When individuals are placed within the formal positions, they begin to exercise their authority and thereby exert *power* *Power* is the effective use of authority Theoretically the allocation of authority in the formal structure divides the power as well, but actually it is the interaction of given individuals with certain amounts of assigned authority that determines how power is divided Conceivably, a person in position B may have more or less power than he has authority

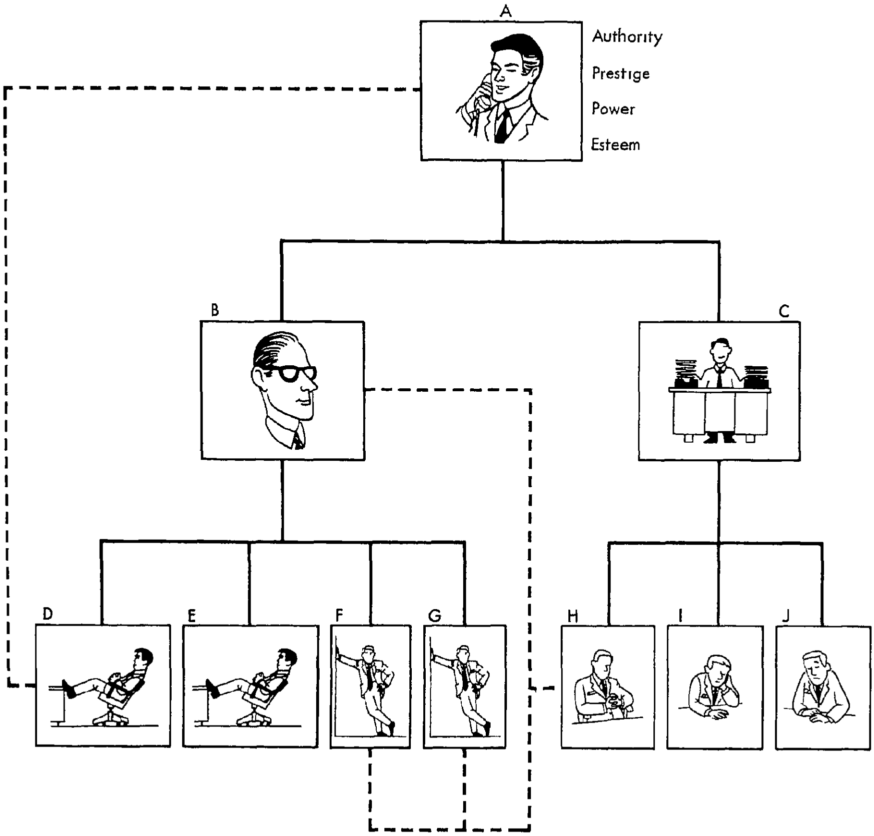

Figure 3 Formal Organizational Structure
Modified by Characteristics of the Personnel

Esteem is also associated with persons Prestige is influenced by location in the formal structure, but esteem is earned by the person who occupies a formal position Again it is possible that a person in block B may have more or less esteem than he has prestige and status

Figure 3 also indicates by the heavy lines that when the static structure of an organization is set in motion with a given complement of workers and managers, informal channels of communication develop These channels may stem from a host of factors, such as previous acquaintance, familial ties, common hobbies and interests, shared irritations, sexual attraction, and congenial temperaments If the individual in position D is the son-in-law of the member in block A, an important informal communication channel between the two may be established If the persons in blocks B, F, G, and H frequently play golf together, they may establish another informal communication network

GATEKEEPERS

Figure 4 adds an important factor to the communication channels, in this instance, a formal position called *executive secretary* This person's duties include the sifting of messages for individuals in positions A, B, and C The executive secretary position shows how some people can act as valves turning off or on the flow of messages through the formal channels Almost any person may do somewhat the same with the messages that flow through the grapevine, although some may be more adept and more highly motivated to ferret out rumors and information and thus play the informal role of gatekeepers Other formal positions may afford a good opportunity to facilitate or impede com-

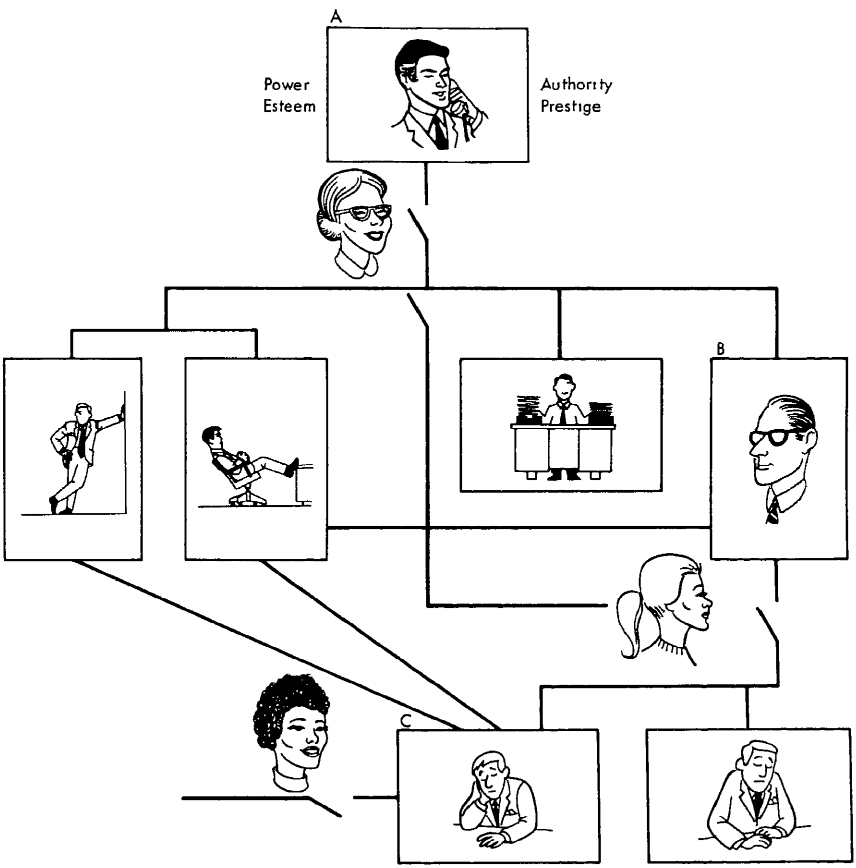

Figure 4 Gatekeepers and Informal Channels of Communication

munication, but few offer more such opportunities than does the position of secretary The secretary may open the boss's mail and decide which letters need immediate attention She may also control his appointment schedule and thus determine who gets in to talk to him She may filter the telephone messages Informally she is in an excellent position to establish lines of communication If she has lunch with other secretaries in the organization, they can keep each other posted on what is going on

A good deal of research has investigated the relationship between the flow of communication and the growth of influence in small laboratory groups One of the implications of research into communication networks is that the individual who receives and controls communition grows in importance and influence in the group Thus, if an artificial network is established as in Figure 5 so that all members can talk

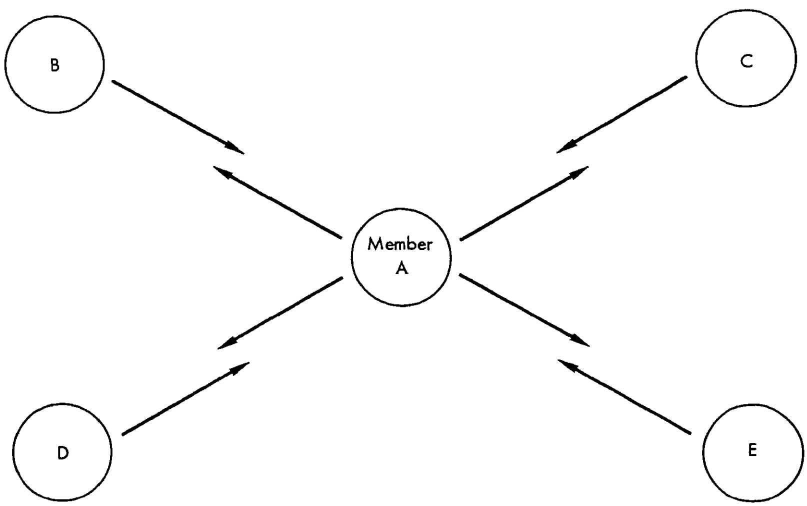

Figure 5 Restricted Communication Net

to A, and A can talk to all members, but no one else in the group can talk to anyone else, A soon becomes a key person To some extent the gatekeeper in an organizational communication network experiences a similar increase in influence The oft-noted instance where the "old man's secretary really runs things around here" illustrates the phenomenon

FORMAL CHANNELS

The formal channels influence the nature of messages in several important ways Organizations tend to specify the nature of the mes-

sages that flow through formal channels They may even be routinized to such an extent that they are expected at a given time of the month or that they are to be presented on a standardized form If they are speech-communication messages they may be expected on certain set occasions (department heads make oral reports in a monthly meeting with the plant manager), they may be restricted as to time (10 to 15 minutes), and they may be in a certain form (an oral presentation with slides, charts, etc , and a period for questions following) Messages sent through formal channels are often given greater consideration and more careful examination They often take much longer to reach their destinations, and as they move from individual to individual up the levels they often experience the distortions common to messages handed on from one person to another It is not uncommon for a person to wish that he might talk directly to someone several levels up the hierarchy rather than having to "work" through channels Much of the so-called red tape and the delay that inhibits quick and decisive action in an organization stems from the cumbersome necessity of sending messages through formal channels

INFORMAL CHANNELS

Often the messages that flow through informal channels, since they have no official sanction, are less carefully drafted and variously interpreted Frequently they contain a high proportion of "scuttlebutt " Still, they furnish an effective medium A few minutes with the boss on the golf course may break a barrier in the formal channels and bring key information to the attention of the organization for decision To understand and use speech-communication in a modern organization, one must map formal and informal channels and make careful decisions about using either or both for a given communication purpose

COMMUNICATION IN A HIERARCHY

Successful communication among equals is difficult enough, but when a formal status ladder is clearly established and emphasized the difficulty is increased We need not write an essay on the sociology of status and the indications of status in organizations because the subject is by now hackneyed It has been discussed in industrial magazines, satirized in motion pictures (the key to the executive washroom), and studied by industrial psychologists The reader will have no trouble listing the status indicators in a given organization Location of the office, rugs and other furnishings, number of secretaries, eating and washing privileges, and the proper dress—all may serve to point up differences in

status Silly as some of these practices may seem to the outsider, to the insider they are useful clues to the prestige and status of others In large organizations where a person needs to deal with other members who are relative strangers such clues are helpful in structuring the communication

Nonetheless, *speech-communication among people with different organizational status is inhibited by that difference* Good communication among equals is often characterized by honesty, ease, consideration of all relevant information, and a high level of feedback But when a supervisor has a conference with subordinates, honest, complete, easy communication with adequate feedback is difficult to achieve simply because one person has authority over others and because he is in a position to control their fate

We have now described our basic frames of reference The process of speech-communication is fitted into the context of the modern organization When a source initiates communication with a given intent and selects his channels, encodes his message, and speaks to his receivers, all elements occur within a human structure that divides work and assigns responsibility, authority, power, esteem, and prestige

In the subsequent chapters we will examine the parts of the communication model in greater detail and analyze its operation in both the formal and informal functions of the modern organization

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Problem Communication Situations in the Modern Organization

TYPICAL ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURES

CHAPTER 3

In Chapter 2 we discussed the general principles of organizational structure and used as an example a typical line structure patterned after the military Such an organization contains units with clearly defined and specialized duties Within the old infantry division was a section devoted to intelligence, another to education and training, and a third to supply Similarly, an industrial enterprise may have divisions devoted to production, research and development, sales, etc

Not all organizations base their formal structures on division of duties A number of modifications of the line principle are in use and we will mention several The reader may be able to supply others from his own experience in organizations Some industrial organizations have grouped their personnel around projects or products Thus, for example, Information Systems, Inc might react to the crisis in procurement by undergoing a thorough formal restructuring If they were about to launch a new 790 data-processing system, they might organize a "Seven-ninety Project" To the unit dedicated to the new project they would assign a complement of engineers, salesmen, buyers, production workers, etc The new group would be under the direction of a project manager Information Systems is a good candidate for such a structure because its products are complicated and expensive Many of the new "brain" industries

now use some modification of the project approach to develop and market their products

Rather than organizing their entire company around producing units, Information Systems might keep the basic line structure they have and designate certain employees in each division who are available for special projects Thus, while the divisions continue to perform established functions, each unit would contain a pool of individuals who might be assigned to teams to develop modifications of established products or to test, produce, and market new items

Systems Analysis of an Organization

No matter what formal structure serves as organizing principle of an institution, every organization is a *system* of overlapping and interdependent groups To understand the nature of the communication difficulties encountered in the operation of an organization, one must first make a *systems analysis*

SMALL GROUP THEORY AND SYSTEMS ANALYSIS

Each of the groups within an organization has a pattern of communication and a structure of its own So vital is this consideration of small group communication that we will devote Chapters 4 to 7 to its discussion.

In this chapter, however, our task is to examine the way the groups communicate with one another and the situations that arise because a person does not work for Information Systems alone, but rather he works for one group in a system of groups Bill Johnson may work for Information Systems and may even own some stock in his company He wishes it well and identifies himself as a member of the firm But Bill Johnson is also a member of the procurement section His section is part of a larger unit that includes personnel and procurement Bill Johnson's unit must relate to the production group and to the sales division If the sales division promises delivery of a computer system by a certain date and the delivery is late, it complains to production If production blames late delivery on component parts, it complains to Bill's group

When the management recommended that the procurement section be established they suggested that it be responsible for purchasing everything required for the operation of the firm However, the head of the janitorial service was an aggressive individual who liked to have control of all aspects of his operation Shortly after procurement began its operations, he suggested that janitorial services be given the respon-

sibility for the purchase of its supplies Bill's group thus found itself in a jurisdictional dispute with another group in the firm

The interrelationship of the various groups within Information Systems adds a dimension to communication that is unique to organizations We turn now to the question, What is the nature of the communications among groups within a larger system?

GROUP SUBCULTURES

Every group that works together for a period of time develops its own way of doing things It develops a style of social interaction, a jargon, and habits of working together But often the subcultures are even more deep-seated and result from years of professional training Thus, Information Systems has an engineering group, a group of accountants, and a group of salesmen The engineers are technically trained, they have studied mathematics and the sciences and share a professional subculture Similarly, a hospital is a system of interrelated groups including such subcultures as doctors, nurses, and medical technicians

The engineers in Information Systems and the doctors in a hospital have the final say about certain technical matters The organization simply must defer to their professional judgment In addition, the highly trained professionals have great power in certain communication situations because they possess delegated authority

GROUP COMPETITION

Within the systems of interdependent and overlapping units that form any modern organization are points of competition and conflict

A recent intriguing explanation of conflict patterns among birds and animals serves to illustrate, if not explain, some intergroup conflict within organizations According to this theory, birds and animals have a territorial instinct that explains some of their rather puzzling behavior The tendency of creatures to be meek and cowardly at times and to fight ferociously at others is caused by the drive to own and defend territory Each bird or animal stakes out an area, and when some other member of the species approaches its borders, the "owner" immediately attacks the aggressor Thus, the points of conflict tend to be at the borders of each animal's territory

Members of organizations do not have the same kind of territorial rights as the old-time ranchers and homesteaders, but they do establish "empires" The prestige of a given unit is enhanced by its growth in size and control The status and prestige of the leader of the unit also grow with an increase in his empire Not only do members of

some groups seek to build an empire within the organization but they almost always defend their group when it comes under attack from other units within the system Thus, when production blames Bill Johnson's group for delays in delivery, he tends to defend his unit and find some other explanation for the problems

GROUP COMPETITION AND CHANGE

If a complicated system of interconnected groups can reach a state of balance—that is, if the territorial boundaries of each group are clear and stable—and if the demands on the entire system are met without strain, then intergroup competition is minimized The tendency in the modern organization, however, is to keep the system in a state of flux Some of the change is planned Most profit-making organizations contain a dynamic to improve the profit margin Even when things are going well they have a drive to do even better Other organizations, too, experience internal, planned and more or less continuous change to improve the effectiveness of the system

Much change is unplanned Pressures from other organizations create a need to adapt to a new challenge Organizations typically grow or contract, and in a corporate culture where the size of the population and the complexity of the culture are on a rapid increase, the tendency is to grow or perish A continual turnover of personnel, additional people, promotions, and resignations add uncertainty Information Systems grew at a faster rate than most organizations because it was on the market with a product at the right moment They rode the crest of a wave of technological improvement The problems posed by the continual growth and addition of personnel for Information Systems, although perhaps more severe than for most organizations, are nonetheless typical

EMPIRE BUILDING WHEN THE SYSTEM IS IN A STATE OF FLUX

When a system of interrelated groups finds itself in a state of flux, the normal jurisdictional boundaries are subject to change Changing boundaries are an invitation to aggressive groups to enlarge their holdings, and they often develop plans to take on responsibilities and power When a company experiences a rapid increase in size as did Information Systems it results in the opening up of new territory New territory also invites the empire builder Every organization has several groups eager to enlarge their jurisdiction and the result is a contest for the new area

The reader may supply his own example of an empire builder

in action We will content ourselves with a resumé of the career of the man who was once chief janitor at Information Systems, Inc , and who was, at the time of the buyer's rebellion, ensconced in one of the largest and best decorated offices in the new building His official title was Manager of the Department of Material Resource Development and Protection The story of his rise within Information Systems reads like today's version of the classic American success story

Jim Malone started at Information Systems as a watchman, janitor, and jack-of-all-trades when the firm consisted of little more than a receptionist, a secretary, and a few engineers and technicians building the prototype of the first computer As the firm expanded he moved a desk into the basement beside the furnace and put up a sign that said "Custodial Services " He soon hired two janitors to clean up the building and concentrated on his duties as a night watchman

Malone was able to do with little sleep so he started to come to the plant early in the afternoon and deliver coffee and doughnuts Soon he initiated the installation of vending machines to sell candy, beverages, sandwiches, and fruit By now the company had grown and Malone's group consisted of several watchmen, four janitors, and two cleaning women

Malone next suggested a company cafeteria, and soon a division of food services became part of his department He added a home economist to his staff, and when the executive offices were to be redecorated Malone offered her services to work with the decorating firm Soon Malone added several painters, carpenters, and decorators to his department He also developed a system of cross charges When his department redecorated or remodeled any rooms or offices for another department, Malone would charge for the labor He thus had a relatively small budget for his department when compared to the actual funds at his disposal He was able to get top management's approval for a scheme whereby all remodeling, redecorating, and carpentry work was to be done by his department, or at least his department's approval was required before outside contractors were allowed to do the job

Since the firm had leased a large old four-story building to house its operations, Malone's services were in great demand so that his department grew in size and influence One of the major problems for the growing firm was parking The downtown parking situation was critical, and the employees and clients of the firm were irritated and inconvenienced by the lack of facilities Malone stepped into the breach and expanding his division of protection added a "policeman" to take charge of parking in the company's lots, and his department assigned parking places for the company

With all these developments Malone's operation had moved from

his desk in the furnace room to ever larger accommodations By keeping a sharp eye for services that were not clearly related to the duties of established departments, he managed to increase his empire in many different directions At first he was viewed with some amusement by the upper level of managers, but as his department grew in size and influence they changed their opinion of him He was, at the time of the move to the new offices, one of the most powerful men in the company When the procurement division was set up and given the responsibility of making all purchases it infringed upon Malone's domain His department had been buying the food for the cafeteria, and the paint, lumber, and other materials for building maintenance Bill Johnson found himself in a series of meetings with Malone and his subordinates that were frustrating and time consuming On paper, rationalizing all purchases by putting them in one department with employees specializing in procurement made good sense, but in terms of establishing new territorial boundaries it caused unforeseen difficulties

Communication Situations in the Modern Organization

WITHIN THE GROUP

A member of an organization finds himself speaking to others within his immediate unit in a wide variety of situations He may pass the time of day when he meets another in the hall, he may talk with several of them in a business conference, he may have an individual conversation in an office, he may call another member on an intercom or by telephone

OUTSIDE THE GROUP

A member of an organization will also find himself talking with individuals who are members of other groups Again he may do so in a conference or by telephone The fact that the source of the communication and the receiver(s) are from different groups often introduces several new and important factors into the situation

The source may represent his group and may seek information to help his unit function for the good of the entire organization On other occasions both the source and the receiver may be representatives of cooperating or competitive groups

SUBORDINATES AND SUPERVISORS

The within-group communication may take place between a subordinate and his supervisor In such a case, the fact that the source and the receiver are both from the same group, share the same group subculture, and that one of them has authority and responsibility that give him some fate control over the other all play an important part The without-group communication may take place between a source that has a higher organizational status than the receiver or vice versa In this case, they do not share the same group subculture, and the individual with the higher status may not have clear fate control over the other Still, the fact that he has higher status within the organization is an important factor in the communication, and if the parties to the meeting are representative of their respective groups, the status difference may be crucial Thus, when Bill Johnson met with Jim Malone he felt the status difference so strongly that at the next meeting he asked Henry Wolfson, who was roughly of the same status as Malone, to come along to protect the department's interests

STATUS EQUALS

Within-group communication may take place among members who have equal organizational status When it does, the communication tends to be less inhibited and freer Without-group communication may also take place among status equals Indeed, when it takes place among representatives of competitive groups it often is purposely conducted among status equals

The Purpose of Communication in the Modern Organization

COOPERATIVE PURPOSES

Frequently individuals participate in speech-communication situations where both the source and the receiver(s) share a common goal They wish to work together to achieve mutual rewards They may wish to share information so that each can make the maximum contribution to the effort to succeed They may wish to learn new skills so that they may achieve more They may speak with the purpose of analyzing a problem and solving it They may wish to decide on priorities, the allocation

of shared resources, and to plan courses of action to work cooperatively for mutual advantage

If the situation is appropriate to cooperation, that fact should be made clear to all, and the main problems of understanding then come from inadequate speech-communication skills Efficient communication is a difficult art and even under the congenial conditions of cooperation among sources and receivers all involved must be skilled in both talking and listening if coordination is to be achieved

COMPETITIVE PURPOSES

In many inter-group speech-communication situations, the source and the receiver(s) have competitive goals That is, Jim Malone wished to gain control over certain activities that Bill Johnson controlled They could not both have dominion over the same territory Therefore when they discussed the situation they did so in order to gain an advantage over one another

Another common competitive situation is the one that Bill Johnson faced daily when he tried to buy a component part at the lowest possible price from a vendor who wished to sell it for as much per unit as possible The two situations are not completely alike because if either Bill or Jim gained, the other lost However, if Bill succeeded in buying a good component, both seller and buyer would be rewarded Still, the immediate goals of selling high and buying low are incompatible When the source wishes to gain at the expense of the receiver(s) and vice versa, the situation can be characterized as a negotiation The communication will emphasize persuasion, offers and counteroffers, threats, coercions, and other shows of physical, economic, and psychological power

Another frequent speech-communication situation that is essentially competitive rather than cooperative arises within the organization when an attempt is made to locate the source of an unexpected and serious problem What ought to be a problem-solving meeting may then degenerate into a buck-passing session An example of such a situation is furnished by a meeting at Information Systems called on the occasion of the third failure to meet an important delivery date

The plant manager Herbert Frandson called and conducted the meeting In attendance were representatives from quality control, research and development, engineering, transportation, and production Frandson outlined the problem and began the meeting by asking for the source of the difficulty He turned first to Hank Gregory from production. Hank admitted they were not meeting production quotas but excused his men on the basis that quality control was continually changing standards As a result of high reject rates the machining division could not deliver

component parts on time Barney Flynn from quality control admitted that they had changed standards but blamed research and development for failing to test the components sufficiently before giving the go-ahead on production Ted Humphrey from research and development maintained the tests had been adequate but blamed engineering for changing the specifications when they designed the production

Within 30 minutes the meeting was concerned with assigning the responsibility for the failure Each representative was defending his unit and scapegoating another group Quite often when a problem arises, discovering the trouble may also imply the assessment of blame, and the representatives of competing groups will tend to defend their groups against others within the overall organization

Implications of Organizational Structure for Speech Communication

We now sum up the outstanding communications characteristics of the modern organization

Organizations are human groupings deliberately constructed and reconstructed to seek goals They are characterized by divisions of labor, power, responsibility, authority, prestige, esteem, and status The socio-emotional interactions and task specializations result in hierarchical structures of communication and authority Certain persons are expected to perform certain tasks with other persons (work structures) Certain persons are expected to direct the activities of specified other people (authority structures) Certain persons have greater rights and privileges than others (status structures) Certain persons expect deferential behavior from others (prestige structures) Certain persons have developed trust relationships with one another (friendship structures)

Each of the hierarchical structures has an important effect upon the communication in the organization by influencing the expectations that people have of who should communicate to whom, about what, and in what manner

Communication problems are intensified by the fact that persons in an organization are in a continual state of flux Staff additions and replacements may be hired New policies and procedures are continually modifying the hierarchical structures

All other things being equal, people will communicate most frequently with people geographically closest to them

All other things being equal, people will communicate most frequently with people closest to their own status within the organization

All other things being equal, people will communicate most frequently with people in their own unit.

The group in an organization has its own subculture. When any particular message is sent to a number of groups within the organization, each group may extract a different meaning from the message depending upon its values and objectives.

Individual Psychology and Organizational Pressures

Experts on the subject of the modern organization, such as Chris Argyris, suggest that some interesting tensions exist between the psychological needs of individuals and the pressures that organizations place upon people. They begin with the assumption that human beings are need-fulfilling and goal-achieving organisms that create various strategies to meet their needs and reach their goals. One of the social strategies is the cooperative development of pyramidal relationships found in the modern organization.

Increasingly, the students of organizational behavior are viewing human beings as achievement-oriented with high autonomy needs. Argyris, for example, would regard human psychology as follows.

Human beings tend to develop from a state of passivity as infants to a state of increasing activity as adults. They develop from a state of dependence upon others to a state of relative independence. As an infant they can act in only a few ways, as an adult they can respond in a variety of ways. They have a short time perspective when children and an ability to view the future when adults. They tend to move from a subordinate position in the family to positions of equality and sometimes of dominance. They begin with little awareness of self as infants until as adults they are aware of both self and self-control.

Many human problems in organizations arise because relatively healthy people are asked to participate in work situations which force them to be dependent, subordinate, and submissive, and which do not require them to use their full potential.

In short, the modern organization by dividing up various functions and establishing a pyramidal structure brings with it the psychological and sociological implications of superior and subordinate, of more important, better, more worthy people in certain positions and less important, less worthy people in other positions.

Healthy human beings tend to find dependence, subordination, and submission frustrating. They would prefer to be independent, they aspire to position equal to or higher than their peers. They wish to be active and develop their abilities through use. Frustrations resulting

from the pressures of modern organizations can lead to regression, aggressiveness, tension, and the restriction of creativity. These, in turn, often lead to conflict and make for major breakdowns in communication.

Leadership, Communication, and Productive Organizations

Producing, distributing, and service organizations consist of individuals and groups whose work is related person to person, group to group, person to organization, and group to organization. The process of getting all of these complicated and interrelated work routines to move along smoothly calls for a high order of decision making, programming, controlling, and evaluation. All of these activities depend upon management.

How does the leader do his complicated job? He does not "handle" people. He persuades, guides, and organizes the tasks of people to accomplish results. He develops and maintains a system of communication. He has a number of critical functions that are dependent upon his ability to communicate. The leader in a modern organization must plan, organize, direct and control, delegate duties and responsibilities, and develop subordinates. In order to accomplish these tasks the effective manager uses a process that involves the following steps: (1) setting up objectives, (2) clarifying the steps to reach the objectives (including communication of functions, responsibilities, authority for decision making to appropriate subordinates), and (3) reviewing the work in the light of the established objectives. Figure 6 diagrams the managerial functions.

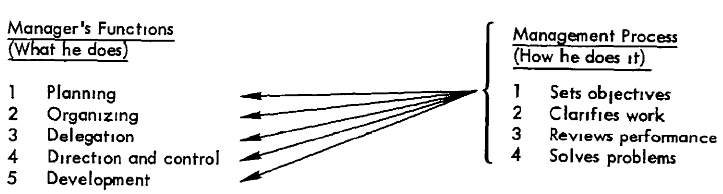

Figure 6. Communication Fundamental of the Entire Process

The "Road Map of Organizational Operation" presented in Figure 7 indicates how the managerial functions operate within the context of the organization. It shows how the entire structure advances through a program from the establishment of goals to evaluations and revisions. Speech-communication plays a key role in each of the steps from the discussion and establishment of overall goals to the final decision-making process, the feedback of results, and the final evaluation and review.

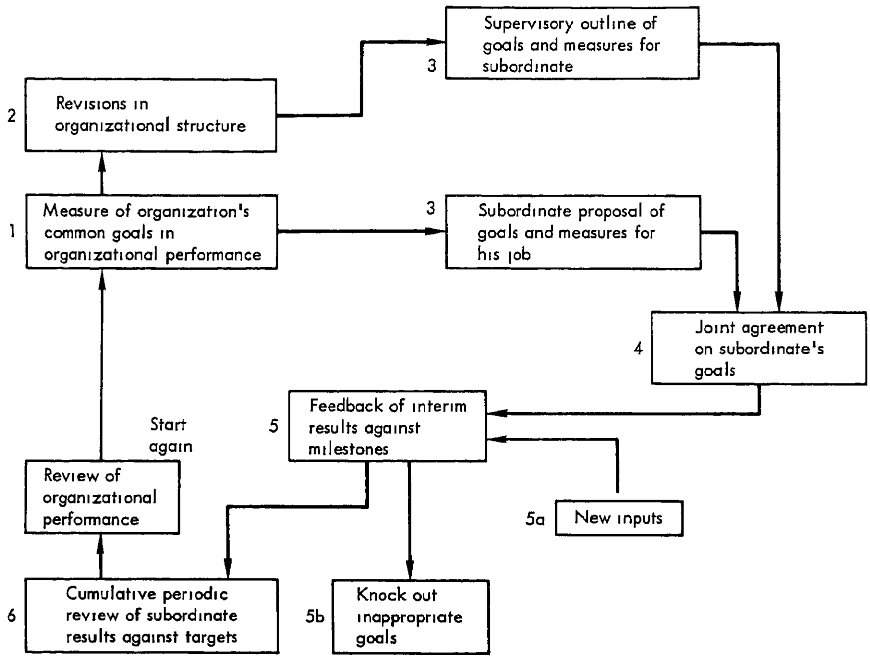

Figure 7 A Road Map of Organizational Operation

At every juncture in the road map crucial mistakes may result from poor communication skills In watching managers at work we have noticed some recurring difficulties that indicate certain dangerous intersections

Poor communication may result in the failure to define objectives clearly When this happens members are unsure as to what they are to do and meaningful review of performance becomes difficult if not impossible

Performance review often turns into a discussion of personality traits rather than an assessment of results in terms of previously stated objectives Personality trait assessment, unless it can be directly related to results in terms of the stated objectives, does little to help the organization

In many organizations objectives are set without first getting an accurate reading on what is going on in the outside world and how the organization is adapting to its external environment Simply stated, management does not listen to the subordinates The oft-heard first-line-manager approach that says, "Well guys I agree with you but the front office says we have to ," is often a symptom of this communication problem Often the organization starts worshiping procedures as ends

in themselves rather than as tools to be used to reach objectives Most of us have heard, "Well, that's not the way we do it around here," or "That's not our policy " Heaven help the man who asks, "Why?" because nobody knows why and people get irritated when some wiseacre asks a question that cannot be answered

Many people in leadership positions have difficulty delegating authority along with responsibility Responsibility without authority breeds insecurity

At this point we hope we have contributed some insights as to why organizations exist, how they are structured, some of the problems found in organizational structures, and some notion as to where to look for potential speech-communication difficulty

In subsequent chapters we will have more to say about ways to plan and develop messages to achieve objectives when an individual participates in any of the speech-communication situations to be found in the common routine of a modern organization

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Small Group Communication in the Modern Organization

CHAPTER 4

In Chapters 2 and 3 we described the relationship between organizational structure and speech-communication The overall context of interrelated and overlapping group functioning as a system of cooperating and competing units was presented This chapter digs deeper into the organizational context to examine the internal workings of the groups themselves and describes the basic dynamics of work groups and relates group process to speech-communication

The Manager as Team Leader

In recent years there has been a significant change in the methods of managing the modern organization Basic to that change is the view that the modern manager must think of himself as working with a team He must not only manage individuals but he must also manage a *work group* The new view does not mean that the manager should ignore individual differences, but it does mean that in addition to employing his skill working with individuals (and developing his ability to communicate with individuals) he must also think of the people in his unit as a team and supervise them as a group

If a manager fails to supervise his unit as a group, he will not keep informal groups from developing but he does run the risk of losing

control of the groups that do form Human nature is such that groups will be formed

If the supervisor concentrates on working with individuals, he abdicates his group leadership role and others will step forward and become informal group leaders The informal leaders may set up goals for the group different than the goals of overall organization For example, the informal leaders may establish different production goals for a work group than those the supervisor sets up

Not until the 1950's did those making a study of organizational management come to a full understanding of the importance of the group as it relates to the problems of communication and leadership in the modern organization As late as 1953 Rensis Likert could write from the Institute for Social Research at the University of Michigan that most books on management and administration dealt with the relationship between superiors and subordinates as individuals Likert reported extensive studies at Michigan indicating that a supervisor's ability to manage his subordinates *as a group* was an important factor in his success

Managers were not alone in being late to recognize the importance of the small group to their concerns Even few *sociologists* and *psychologists* discovered the importance of small groups until the Second World War Work done by A Paul Hare consisted of a list of studies of small groups covering the period from 1890 to 1958 He found that from 1890 to 1899 only about one study was published *every two years* As late as the 1930's only 21 studies were published per year After the war the research into the work group mushroomed until in the three years from 1950 to 1953 on the average of over 150 research studies were published yearly, and this figure has increased steadily ever since

Why has there been so much interest of late in *basic* research in group process? Of course the number and complexity of organizations in contemporary society are factors, but more importantly, the war put a premium on the productivity and morale of people in military, governmental, and industrial organizations We had to produce to win the war Government and industry spent millions of dollars to study the factors that go into productivity and morale, and one of the discoveries of that massive research program was the importance of the operations of the small interrelated work groups to the success of the organization

The Leaderless Group as a Research Tool

One of the most interesting ways in which the investigators discovered the basic dynamics of the work group was by means of the leaderless group discussion The studies in group process, communication, and leadership at the University of Minnesota, which provided much of the

material for this chapter, used the technique of the leaderless group discussion extensively The leaderless group is essentially a test-tube situation in which people who do not know one another are placed in a work group and given a specified amount of time to do a job The group has no formal structure The investigators do not appoint any member as leader, moderator, manager, supervisor, or spokesman Every member of the leaderless group discussion is equal No one is looked down upon and no one is looked up to at the start In addition they each can perform any or all of the jobs that the group needs to have done to succeed

In this test tube the normal operations of everyday work groups are speeded up and the basic patterns of group process are easy to observe and study The amazing thing is that at the end of several hours the members of the group begin to specialize and some members are looked up to and some are looked down on by the group The tendency to specialize is characteristic of most groups

What does this mean? It means that the formal structure of an organization is simply spelling out in the table of organization what takes place in all informal work groups If the formal structure always matched the informal structure, most organizations would be highly productive, highly cohesive, and enjoy considerably more communication efficiency than they now do

Our problem comes from the fact that the informal structure is changing, fluctuating, and dynamic whereas the formal structure is static Too often the formal structure no longer describes what is in fact going on in the dynamics of an organization Trying to understand the dynamics of such an organization by reading the table of organization or the names on the office doors is like trying to find your way in a town by using a map that is 20 years out of date

To understand the communication patterns in an organization one must understand the small work groups that actually do the job We must begin, therefore, with an analysis of the process that governs the small work group and then we can, in Chapter 5, relate this to the formal structure of the organization

When we present the principles that govern group process and communication we are distilling the results of many investigations and thousands of experiments in the last 20 years including the extensive case studies, seminar reports, theses and dissertations in the task-oriented small group at the University of Minnesota

Role and Status

In the test tube of the leaderless group discussion the first important reaction to take place is the specialization of the members When it becomes clear to a person in a leaderless group that he is specializing

and when the group discovers that he is doing more of certain things than the others, he takes a place in the group That is, while he may do a number of things to help the group reach its goal the group expects that he will concentrate on certain things He too expects to do these tasks When these expectations are clear and shared by both the member and the other people in the group, he has taken a *role* We will define *role* as the part a person expects to play and the part that the other members expect him to play in the group It includes the duties that he specializes in and the way he socializes with the others The latter is often called his personality

One extremely important and interesting finding from basic research is that an individual's personality changes to some extent from group to group The buxom receptionist who has such a sparkling personality at the office and kids around with the boys may be very quiet and reserved when she meets with the young people at her church She may even be ill-tempered and bossy with her family You may take different *roles* in different groups In one group you are the "take-charge" member who gets things rolling In another you are likable and fun-loving In still another, you are a quiet, steady, and responsible worker Which is the *real* you? This seems to be an easy question to answer, when in reality it is not You bring to every work group certain skills that you have developed in school or in working with other groups at other jobs You also bring certain inherited capacities for work, for intellectual activity, and for socializing But what you do for a given work group is dependent upon the skills and potentialities of the other members of the group as well as your own talents To ask whether a person is more real using his abilities to play the role of parent in his family or whether he is more real assuming the role of manager at work is not very helpful It is also too simple If we think of people as having a certain set personality and abilities, we can often explain away our problems by placing the blame for them on individuals whom we consider innately bad people We then attribute to them such traits as stubbornness, bossiness, and unreasonableness They are causing all the trouble in the organization, if they just changed their ways or if the group could get rid of them, the problems would disappear The role a person plays is partly a result of his talent and skill but it is also partly a result of the role the group gives him This brings us to the first important principle relating to role development

THE ROLE A MEMBER TAKES IN A GROUP IS WORKED OUT BY THE MEMBER AND THE GROUP TOGETHER

This principle has an important corollary that is too often overlooked in the management of the modern organization

THE GROUP IS PARTLY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE WAY EACH MEMBER ACTS

When a manager understands this principle and its corollary he experiences a complete change of viewpoint about the men in his organization and how best to manage them The manager then understands that a man who seems to be lazy and shiftless may become hardworking and conscientious if the group changes its treatment of him He also realizes that a man he thinks to be pigheaded and unreasonable may become agreeable and reasonable if the subordinate's role is changed Such a manager no longer explains away his troubles by blaming them on the innate (and unchangeable) nature of his workers He begins to search for ways to change the role structure of his work group so that every member can contribute to the full extent of his ability He begins to truly utilize the resources of his group Such should be the goal of every manager

Once every member has found his place and the duties that make up his role, a second important reaction takes place in the test tube of the leaderless group discussion The members evaluate the relative worth *to the group* of each role They give the highest status to the roles they judge to be most valuable

After several hours of meeting, the group begins to *look up* to some members Groups with stable role structures generally agree on the status ladder that characterizes their group At the University of Minnesota such groups have been studied by means of questionnaires and interviews, and there is high agreement among the members about the high status and low status roles in the group Again it might seem that peers working together without any formal structure (no leader or supervisor or manager assigned) could function as equals, and all share in all the tasks We have not observed any groups that worked in this way There is an innate drive to establish status relationships and a "pecking order" in the leaderless discussion group

An observer can classify the roles in order of importance by watching the way the members act toward one another For example, the members will talk directly and at greater length to the people they consider important in the group The high status person tends to talk more to the entire group The high status member receives more consideration from the others They listen to what he says Indeed, they often stop what they are doing in order to listen more carefully The others often ignore or cut off the comments of the low status individuals The members spend more time and thought on the ideas and opinions suggested by people with high status

The group decides which members they will look up to on the

basis of their notion as to who is most important to the group This decision is influenced by their goals Some groups clearly succeed or fail A basketball team for example either wins or loses In addition, a given player's contribution can sometimes be measured in terms of how many points he contributed to victory In such a situation the high point man may have high status In organizations where success or failure is not so easily measured, such as in administering a university or a governmental service department, the best liked person in the group may have higher status than the task experts For many organizations the member who organizes the work is thought of as the *leader* by the others and he often has the highest status

No pattern of role and status arrangements will fit all groups Even similar groups will differ on these matters Some people may be so skillful at the jobs they do that they have a higher status than others playing a role that usually is more important Some work groups may give the task expert a higher status because he is particularly skillful and less status to the leader because he is not as skillful in his role

Status and Social Satisfactions

The social and esteem satisfactions that a member receives come largely from his status High status roles are pleasant and rewarding The group makes a high status member feel important and influential They show him deference, they listen to him, ask his advice and often take it When he expresses an opinion they give it careful consideration. In formal organizations the high status member often gets a greater share of the group's goods than the lower status member He gets a bigger office, more secretaries, better furniture, more salary One of the most powerful forces drawing members into the organization and making them cohesive and dedicated members willing to work more than is required is the reward of high status

The member filling a high status role in an organization has many of his social and esteem needs filled and he thus works hard for the good of the group Too often the low status member does not get these rewards so he simply puts in his time and draws his salary However, highly cohesive groups developed in our laboratory have worked out ways to fulfill the esteem and social needs of low status members as well as those of the high status members

Struggle for Role and Status

Since the role is closely associated with the standing in the organization and a great deal of reward goes to the "leader" and the other

high status members, several of them typically struggle for the top positions This struggle creates a conflict and disagreements between the competing members The group's energy is directed to the question of who will win out and a good bit of its attention is directed away from the job If these struggles are prolonged and heated, the group may be torn with internal dissension to the point that their work suffers Most of us have been associated with or heard about an organization in which the fight for control, the backbiting, and infighting have reached the point that the organization's effectiveness and sometimes its very existence are threatened Several years ago one of the authors invested a small amount of money in the stock of a newly formed company that had an unusually bright future The company had a patent on an easy to build almost foolproof outboard motor that worked on a jet principle They floated a successful bond issue and went into production For a time the stock held up and then it began to drop Shortly, a bitter proxy fight broke out between the engineer in charge of production and the sales manager The company was in danger of failing A desperate reorganization was attempted The stock continued to decline and finally it was no longer listed in the local market

Recently a long letter outlining the problems of mismanagement and the struggle for control of the young company was sent to all stockholders There may have been other contributing factors, but certainly the primary reason for this firm's failure was the internal struggle for leadership

The Basic Process

The most intriguing question we have investigated has been, How do roles emerge? How does the process of specialization take place? In concrete terms, what makes the small work group tick? We will spell out the answer to this vital question in terms of an idealized group that serves us as a model of the basic process Although any given group will vary to some degree from this model, basically this is the way it works

Five members have been assigned to a work group They have not been given any role assignments They do not know one another but they do have a clear goal and comprehension of the specific jobs that must be done to reach that goal Each of the members can do every task that the group needs to have done Some members, however, can do some of the things better than others Some are trained and talented in mechanical matters and are capable of thinking through technical problems and are clever at building things Others are more adept at making plans, still others are good at testing ideas To get this work

done and to reach their goal, the members must depend upon the resources of skill and talent that each of them brings to the job.

If a chemist mixes the proper proportion of chemical substances in a test tube and starts a chemical reaction, it usually takes some time before the process is completed. When the reaction comes to an end he will have a different substance. Should he halt the reaction before it is finished he would find that the test tube contained some of the original substances as well as some of the new ones. Our test tube of group process operates in an analogous way. Into the group we place members with abilities to perform with varying degrees of skill the tasks required, and when the process is completed each member of the group has a role that describes his specialized function. We will begin with one of the first social tasks required when people first meet. They all feel tense and ill at ease. Anyone who has been at a tea party where he is unacquainted knows how stiff and formal and uncomfortable the social climate can be. Every group that meets for the first time experiences a similar feeling of social stiffness. The insecurity of the situation causes the social tension.

Precisely because the members do not have roles, they do not know what to expect. They may be laughed at, ignored, ridiculed, admired, respected, or liked. When the group first meets it provides a social climate that deprives the members of social and esteem needs. Not only that, but it holds out the promise of satisfying those needs. No wonder the members feel tense and nervous. The first important task facing the group is the release of this social tension. They have to get to know one another and feel at ease before they can get down to business.

Professor Robert F. Bales of the Human Relations Laboratory at Harvard University discovered that the best way to release such tensions is by getting the group to laugh, chuckle, or smile. Social tensions can be broken by a member poking fun, making small talk, by being friendly and gracious, and by appearing to be at ease. This task can be called the *release of tension function*.

Although there are tensions to be released early in the first meeting, it is found that social tensions build up at other times as well, so that the need to release tensions remains. For example, the group experiences a short period of tension at the beginning of every meeting and tension continues to crop up at the start of each work session even though its nature is usually much less severe.

Typically, each work day (work session) begins with some chitchat or joking of a social nature to reestablish in everyone's minds that the roles are pretty much the same as they were when they left the work group and that they can continue on in the same way.

In our model group there are two members, Bill and Joe, who

have previously released tensions in other groups and who have some talent in this direction In addition, they enjoy the rewards it offers—laughter, social approval, and being well liked by the other members They know that the person who performs the tension-release function is often the most popular member They are both, thus, alert to any signs of social tension They both must try to "break the ice"

Bill has developed a characteristic way of doing this He begins to make small talk about anything that comes into his head The sillier the better, and when he sees someone respond in a friendly way he makes a mildly insulting personal comment about that person and then laughs to indicate that it is all in fun Joe has his own style of humor He is clever at impersonations and has an expressive face He is a good pantomimist and actor

Bill begins by making small talk and then insults Harry He then waits for the reaction Normally he does not get a big belly laugh The first response of the group is tentative, and often Bill cannot tell whether they liked it or not

Joe is encouraged to give it a try and he does a little pantomime routine about how cold it is in the room Can't they get a little more heat, he wonders Bill watches to see the result of this ploy Again the response is not clear So Joe tries once more and then Bill gets another chance The other group members watch Joe and Bill demonstrate their wares and then they decide whether this job should be primarily Joe's or Bill's or whether they might share it In the latter case they would "clown" around together

All of this takes place subconsciously The group members are often not aware of what is going on They simply notice that Bill is tactless and smart-alecky and that Joe is really rather funny When they come to this conclusion they begin to laugh at Joe and ignore Bill's attempts at humor If he continues to try to be funny, they may start to groan and grimace and in other ways let him know that they do not appreciate it After some time Joe will do more and more of the joking because he gets positive rewards for doing so, and Bill will gradually stop his attempts At this point part of Joe's role will be set He will begin to specialize He will expect to be funny and the group will expect him to step in when things get tense and inject humor to relax the atmosphere

But what will happen should Joe fail to live up to expectations? If he appears at work one day with a long face and is quiet and glum, the group resents his change They say he is not himself today They ask if he is sick Should Joe begin to take on a different role, such as making a serious suggestion about an important decision, the group may not take him seriously at all

Once the social tensions are broken the group will get down to business To do so someone must take the initiative The "take-charge" function is much like the tension-release function, and several members will be competent in this area Tom and Dick have done this task for groups in the past and they enjoy the rewards of being the "take-charge" person

As soon as Tom feels that the social tensions have been eased he says, "All right Let's get going I suggest we start by " He does not get immediate acceptance The other group members do not say, "That's a good idea Let's do that" They say and do little one way or another, this encourages Dick to step forward "I don't quite understand what you mean Would you run through that again?" Tom patiently explains his plan of action, thinking that Dick is not very bright

Dick now sees what Tom is driving at but he says, "I'm not sure that we have to do it that way How about this? Wouldn't this be better?" Dick now makes a suggestion about how the group can best accomplish its task Gradually the others begin to follow Dick's directions more than they follow Tom's suggestions When most of them follow Dick, he takes charge and organizes work and gives assignments and directions, he will be thought of by the group as their "leader"

In the same way each member is gradually accepted as the person who performs most or part of a given task Each member is thus led to specialize by the group's encouragement He does not have a complete monopoly on a given task, but he does most of it Thus, Tom may be witty on occasion, and although the group appreciates his wit, the members think of Joe as their "tension releaser" Similarly, Harry may take charge of getting the group work done from time to time even though Dick is the member who does this for the group most of the time

Although some roles are established easily and quickly, the role of "leader" is often among the last roles to emerge in the leaderless discussion groups and sometimes no leader emerges at all In a careful depth study of 16 such groups that met for as long as 12 weeks, almost one-third never succeeded in producing a leader The groups in which a leader failed to emerge were uniformly unsuccessful and socially punishing to their members They were torn with strife, waste of time, and frustration Much of the energy of the members went into the contention for high status positions and little was left over for getting the job done These groups suffered from absenteeism and low levels of cohesiveness

The most highly cohesive and successful groups, on the other hand, were those in which leaders emerged quite early and in which the other members assumed stable roles In addition, every individual was happy with his role, even those with low status positions In these groups

the members' security needs were fulfilled They knew what to expect when they came to work They knew what they were supposed to do and how the others would react when they did so They could relax and "be themselves"

Typically, the test-tube groups experienced a dramatic increase in cohesiveness when role structure stabilized As a result they were more productive They began to help one another get the job done for the good of the group They also experienced an improvement in the *communication efficiency* of the group

Communication and the Role Struggle

The group undergoing the "shakedown cruise" that is associated with the role struggle experiences a number of communication problems In the first place, during this stage people do not *listen* Chapters 10 to 12 will indicate in detail the importance of the proper attitude in the development of listening skill Even skillful listeners seldom have the proper attitude to listen in the periods of role struggle When it is important to be listening, people are eager to get the floor and make a showing They want to demonstrate their abilities and make a good impression

When they are not talking they do not listen carefully to another person but rather they are thinking of things that they might say next, and how they might best say it Very little questioning goes on during this period When a member does make a comment he often moves from one topic to another because he wants to get as much into the speech as he can while he has the floor He is, in a sense, showing off his abilities rather than working together with the other members to get the job done As a result, the group involved in a role struggle often wanders from topic to topic with little plan

In addition, a good many disagreements arise that are not disagreements at all but simply a result of not listening carefully Bill catches just a phrase about "production standards programs" in something Harry says and immediately launches a speech on the failure of previous plans to set rates of production Had he listened more carefully and given Harry a chance to finish his comments, he would have discovered that Harry was not advocating a new plan of any sort Harry, however, perceives Bill's speech as an attack on his intelligence so he makes some general philosophical comments to the effect that just because previous plans have failed is no sign that the group should not try to improve things

Second, the groups struggling over roles had some pseudo-

misunderstanding A member has no desire to follow the directions of a contender for leadership He does not say so directly, however He simply does not do the job he was directed to do When he is called to task about it, he answers that he did not understand that he was to do the job, or that he did not understand that the job was to be done at this time, or that he did not understand what the person was talking about at all

When Tom made his first leadership move by taking charge and suggesting that the group go to work in a certain way, Dick's first response was not to disagree but to pretend he did not understand During the time it took Tom to explain his suggestion once more, Dick was thinking up his own course of action In short, he understood all right but he did not want to follow Tom's lead and so he pretended not to understand

Finally, people in the midst of a role struggle are often more interested in the outcome of battle than they are in their job They have a "hidden agenda" that is more important than the matter they are talking about Some of the test-tube groups have quibbled for an hour or more over the wording of a report during this phase of their work To an observer who did not understand the hidden agenda the whole argument was ridiculous The changes in wording were relatively unimportant, but when at the conclusion of the quibble the man whose wording was accepted was also clearly perceived as the leader, an important item on the hidden agenda had been settled The meeting went a long way to stabilizing the roles in the group and although this meeting was very frustrating to many of the members and they felt they had wasted a lot of time, the next meeting was much more productive because the roles had stabilized

This preoccupation with the role and status also keeps down the "feedback" within the group The member who fails to ask for information often does so because he does not want to lose status by admitting his ignorance If he appears ignorant he knows he is unlikely to get a high status role in the group He often pretends to know more than he does, as a result he is confused and unable to do his share

When the roles stabilize, the communication efficiency increases not only because of the increased cohesiveness, but because each member feels secure in his position He can afford to admit ignorance without losing status He can now afford to disagree with ideas and point out shortcomings in plans of action

During the period of role struggle such disagreements and testing of ideas are often perceived as a personal attack on the individual presenting the ideas After roles have stabilized, the ideas themselves can be considered on their merit without undue attention to whose ideas

they are because the members do not rise or fall on the basis of their ideas Rather, ideas and plans are now tested in terms of their usefulness *to the group* When this happens the members no longer need to take the floor and demonstrate their abilities and they are more willing to listen and to understand A large part of the social structuring has been dealt with and they can concentrate on the task at hand

Too many technically trained managers spend almost all of their time concentrating on production or development of new prototypes or on technical problems of manufacturing and quality control, assuming that this is what they are supposed to be doing When a human relations problem causes a decrease in productivity they are irritated because they feel such problems have no place in an industrial organization Every supervisor who wishes to improve his communication ability within the organization must recognize that the social structuring of groups and the human relations problems that go along with it are very much a part of his job Indeed, these often have to be solved before the group can concentrate on production or technical problems

The Role of Leader

The basic model of the test-tube group explains the way in which a "leader" naturally emerges during the course of a group's working on a task The leader role is a high status role, normally the highest position in the group People size up the potential leaders with great care before indicating a willingness to follow a particular one Individuals are cautious about committing themselves, not only because of the high status of leadership and the fact that when a leader is selected the others lose their chance at the important role, but also because the leader relates directly to each member in a personal way The task expert may have a high status but he does not give directions and orders to the others nor does he make decisions that so frequently and clearly affect the entire group as does the leader

Our studies of test-tube groups reveal a definite pattern in the social interactions leading to the emergence of leaders The group does not choose a leader at once Rather, the group eliminates members from contention until all except one are removed When all but one are eliminated, the person remaining has emerged as the leader

Very early in their meetings the leaderless group discussion eliminates those who seem clearly unsuited for leadership Members are searching for clues that will disqualify people rather than for evidence that will support a campaign for leadership In the case studies conducted

at the University of Minnesota the first to be eliminated were those whom the others perceived to be quiet, uninvolved, or uninformed The inactive members were generally eliminated within the first hour Roughly one-half of the members were ruled out of leadership in the early phase The others were in active contention for leadership during the second phase of the process Typically, in groups of five the pattern was to have two or three members still under consideration after the early rejection of those perceived as clearly unsuitable

The second period was characterized by intensive competition among the remaining contenders During the second phase the role of lieutenant for one of the potential leaders often appeared A member, out of contention, began to give strong and overt support to the leadership moves of a candidate The point at which one of the contenders wins a lieutenant is a crucial one for the structuring of the work group If a member who wins the support of another is quite clearly the best of the remaining candidates, one strong supporter is often enough to swing the uncommitted members to his side

A rather common pattern is to have three of five members eliminated early in the work sessions Member A might become the tension releaser and best-liked member and thus be removed from contention as a possible leader Members C and D might be eliminated because they do not seem involved or informed Members B and E are left to contend for the top position If during this second phase member B is perceived by member A to be arbitrary and tactless, while member E seems more understanding and better organized, member A will begin to support actively and follow the directives and suggestions of member E Members C and D will usually follow A's example and member E will emerge as leader

When the leader emerges, the group will experience a considerable release of social tension and a corresponding increase in cohesiveness Of course, not all of the role problems are solved and the group may still have serious difficulties

The member who loses in the final clear-cut struggle for leadership is a potential source of trouble As a rule he is one of the more capable people, otherwise he would not have remained in contention for so long When he loses his bid for leadership he will be frustrated and upset—perhaps sufficiently so as to try to sabotage the group He often believes the group to be unreasonable and disorganized He thinks they have made many wrong decisions about the best way to proceed, and he usually considers the man he has been contending with to be personally obnoxious He finds himself involved in a *personality* conflict He does not think that he can work with the leader When possible,

groups take the easy way out at this point and force the loser out or transfer him to another group Sometimes he removes himself by dropping out or resigning

This member can be knit back into the group and given a productive and useful role The conversion is not an easy one, however The newly emerged leader often has as much animosity toward the contender as the contender has for the leader The leader finds his antagonist unreasonable and thinks of him as a source of trouble The greatest mistake he can make is to exploit the power of his new leadership role to make life miserable for his antagonist Indeed, in some of our case studies the newly emerged leader who proceeded to punish his opponent lost his position

The wise leader, with support from his lieutenant and the others, always takes special pains at this crucial point in the group's development to encourage the last member eliminated in the shuffle for leadership to take a high status position commensurate with his capacities Although the loser may never become completely reconciled to his role, he should be given a place in which he is committed to the group's goals and in which he can work for rather than against them

The groups that follow the above pattern of emerging leadership (we will call it Pattern I) generally have a short and easy time of structuring and specializing the tasks that each member will perform

Pattern II provides a more frustrating and difficult path to achieve roles and cohesiveness In cases that followed this pattern the first phase was the same as in Pattern I That is, if the group had five members, three would again be eliminated quickly We will again call these three members A, C, and D

The second phase would proceed in much the same way until the crucial moment when member A became member E's lieutenant At that point in a group following Pattern II, member C would become member B's lieutenant The group's work is now conducted in the following fashion Member B suggests a course of action and member C supports it However, member E disagrees and suggests a different way of proceeding and member A agrees with E Member D thus is in the crucial position of determining almost every major decision

Member D finds himself in this swing-vote position because he was tentative, quiet, and apparently uninvolved during the early meetings He is the typical independent voter—not committed to either party and seemingly apathetic He does not make clear-cut decisions and he does not come down strongly on the side of either faction He tries to "stay out of it" and "above the battle"

In one case study the structure solidified for almost a week at this point The person playing the role of member D was unusually

tentative and uncomfortable with the responsibility of breaking all major deadlocks Finally, after a particularly fruitless session in which the two factions had bickered for most of an hour, member A turned to him and challenged, "Where do you stand?" To which member D replied, "Right in the middle" Finally, after continued pressure of this type, member D did begin to support members E and A, and the role structure stabilized amidst much joking, release of tension, and general agreement that the meeting had been useful and "the best meeting so far"

In this case the group did succeed in finding a high status position for member A, and the leader, member E, exercised considerable tact and understanding in the process The extended and acrimonious struggle resulting from this pattern made the accommodation of member A a crucial and extremely difficult one

Pattern III is also a more complicated and often more difficult way to structure a group than is Pattern I Groups that follow this pattern contain people whose actions for one reason or another are so impressive and fascinating to the other members that they become engrossed with their behavior and permit their attention to be distracted from the normal preoccupations with role structuring We shall call these members *central persons* They are central in that the group's attention is focused on them

The central person may be a "star" in that his early behavior gives so much promise in helping the group at its task that he stands above the other members of the group Perhaps he is a "star" because his efforts at creating a pleasant social climate are exceptionally pleasant, charming, and amusing

Possibly the central person may be perceived as a great threat to the success of the group If he is seen as extremely hostile to the organization and its purposes or seems unusually apathetic and uninvolved, his attitude can become a central concern One case study following this pattern had a member called "Mr Negative" Often the negative central person is an active and dominant personality

One central person was a voluble and articulate individual who systematically demolished all the values important to the success of the group He belittled their goals He asserted that he for one was not going to work any more than he had to for the group and laughingly admitted that he was irresponsible and lazy As far as he was concerned the main things in life were gambling, drinking, women, and sports cars

One of the more common negative central persons is the "manipulator" who comes into the group with a conscious intention to exploit it *for his own ends* He intends to take it over He plans to get *his* ideas rammed through the group He sees his task as one of carefully planning

a strategy of take-over and then coercing the people to follow his way and achieve his purposes

Manipulators tend to employ either a "hard" sell or a "soft" sell approach, but no matter what technique they use the members soon perceive these persons to be a central problem to the success of the group The hard sell manipulator usually comes on strong He talks a great deal and he takes charge almost immediately, with vigor "Let's get down to business Here's what I suggest we do" When the group rejects his attempt to take over he tries to argue them down He grows louder and more voluble When the group begins to support another leader-contender he attacks the ideas of this member Often he stands alone against the rest, with everyone getting more excited, loud, and frustrated Occasionally, he talks so vigorously that for a time no other member of the group wishes to challenge him He is so certain of his positions and asserts himself so strongly that the group reluctantly appears to go along for a time

Here, the manipulator thinks that he has achieved leadership However, when he gives orders they are not followed People continually misunderstand him and fail to follow through even when they admit they understand The manipulator, typically, decides that he has not been doing a good job of leading and he must exercise more leadership His notion of more leadership is to do more of what got him in trouble in the first place He now gives his orders very slowly and carefully in simple English as though he were talking to morons When he finishes his directives he says, "All right, now repeat it so that I am sure you understand" When this tactic results in even greater resentment and more "goldbricking" he bawls them out for being lazy and irresponsible

Inevitably another contender emerges and the group gratefully supports him for the position of leader The manipulator is now extremely frustrated His self-image is badly dented He came into the group confident of his superiority and his ability to run things his way The group, however, has rejected him and foiled his attempts He seldom examines where he has failed but he often turns on the group They are ignorant and stupid The group itself is unimportant If he remains, he is likely to prove a troublemaker Several of our test groups have managed to find a role in which the often considerable talents of a manipulator were useful to the group, but this is unusual

The manipulator who employs the soft sell approach is often more successful in the early stages of the group's development He may quickly emerge as group leader This type of manipulator is more sophisticated than the first He has greater awareness of the "tricks and formulas" of human relations He is friendly and congenial He seems less bossy and more democratic and shows a great deal of consideration for

others He asks their opinion, puts himself in their shoes, prefaces his disagreements with statements of understanding and agreement He tries to size up the other members of the group and figures out which ones he can "con" and which will be troublesome for him He does more work outside formal meetings by chatting with other members over coffee When he begins to structure the group, he often asks the group's opinion "How should we begin?" he asks

If he is good at playing this part, the manipulator may fool the group for several days and they will give him their support as leader After several weeks of working together, however, the others find him out They discover that he is getting his way and that behind his congenial and democratic front he has been using the group for his own purposes In over 100 cases studied only one manipulator succeeded in fooling his group for more than one month When the smooth manipulator is found out the group must undergo another reshuffling of roles His leadership is challenged, he is deposed, and the new leader emerges All of this is painful to the group and reduces their cohesiveness and efficiency

The groups that follow Pattern III to a successful conclusion all select leaders who demonstrate that they can handle the problems posed by the central person Quite often the moment of leadership decision comes as the result of a dramatic crisis that the group attributes to the central person Many times members testify that they supported a given individual for leadership because he was "strong" enough to handle a hard sell manipulator Sometimes the leader-contender who can find a productive role for a "Mr Negative" and can knit him into the group so that he no longer takes up so much of the group's time and attention will emerge as leader Some groups never complete Pattern III The struggle over leadership is never resolved No member is strong enough to handle the manipulator The negative central person establishes the group norms so that finally the group itself becomes apathetic or negative

Pattern IV is a truncated pattern, and the groups that take this path seldom achieve role specialization and stability They typically are fraught with social tensions and frustrations for their entire time together People find these groups punishing, hence their general cohesiveness is low and they do not make efficient use of their human resources

A typical case study of Pattern IV involves a panel of four people, two men and two women At the end of the first phase one of the women was eliminated from the contention for leadership because she was shy and retiring The remaining three members were all verbal, aggressive, and dominant in their attempts to achieve a high status role One of the men was particularly task-oriented and hard-driving in

his attempt to rigidly structure the group The woman who remained in contention fought particularly hard against his attempts During the course of several weeks of intensive competition these two formed very strong attitudes toward one another that kept one from ever supporting the other as leader The third member was more relaxed in his manner and a potential compromise leader except that neither of the two remaining contenders would support him in the role The result was leadership in a constant state of flux If one of the three contenders seemed to be gaining support, the other two would combine against that member In the course of this combination one of these two might seem to be emerging, but when that possibility became apparent the supporter would switch and start to resist the emerging leader By maintaining this precarious balance, each of the three contenders assured that neither of the other two emerged as leader They seemed to have arrived at a covert agreement that it was a lesser evil to have a group without a stable role structure than to have to follow one of the other contenders

Quite often a group fails to stabilize roles when each of the contenders for leadership has substantial handicaps A typical case of this variation of Pattern IV is furnished by the group that eliminated three of its five members as leaders in the first phase and was left with two potential leaders Member A had a strong aggressive style of structuring the group He moved to a blackboard and began to divide up the work almost immediately He took charge and "came on strong" Several of the members perceived him to be a hard sell manipulator The members immediately resisted his efforts to organize the work

Member D began to lead the opposition to member A by questioning the advisability of proceeding in the way that A had suggested Member A received a great deal of support to start with, but as the meeting progressed the members shifted their support from member A to member D The members perceived that member D was congenial and less aggressive in his style of making suggestions and giving orders and in this respect they much preferred him to member A However, they also discovered that member D was very tentative and fuzzy in his thinking and that he was quite indecisive

Member A was much more capable at developing a clear coherent course of action to facilitate the work, so he was clearly the best man to help the members do the job Member D was much more adept at showing consideration for the group members and fulfilling their social and esteem needs Since on balance the members perceived the two remaining contenders as roughly equal and both had severe handicaps, they did not follow either man and the role structure never stabilized

Effect of Changing Membership on Role Structure

NEW MEMBERS JOIN THE GROUP

In some case studies at the University of Minnesota a new member was introduced into the group after the role structure had stabilized The addition of another member proved to be unsettling He brought a complement of skills and talents to the organization, and a role had to be found for him In a sense all of the roles had to be reshuffled to free enough duties to form a place for the new man

The process of absorbing a new member proved extremely distressing Often the members did not understand what was happening For a brief period he was something of a central person and, on occasion, a popular one That is, he was attended to and welcomed into the organization The members talked to him and got acquainted with him and sometimes felt that he would be able to make a positive contribution to the work Soon the members turned their attention back to the job and found that people were acting in unexpected ways They were back in a painful period of role reorganization When the old members did not grasp what was happening, they responded to the natural frustrations associated with this role struggle by blaming the new member for their problems "If he weren't in the group, we would still be all right Everything was fine until he joined us"

OLD MEMBERS LEAVE THE GROUP

In some case studies a member was removed from highly cohesive groups with stable role structures Here, too, a new role struggle resulted The tasks that the former member had performed now had to be assumed by the remaining members of the organization If he had performed important duties that had made him a highly regarded member, the members who had been doing low status tasks often tried to take over his role and gain the social and esteem rewards that went with it The struggle was particularly intense in those instances where several members of the group stood to gain by *climbing* upward into the vacant role

Again the members often were surprised by the change of events They did not understand what went wrong A few weeks ago they were highly cohesive and successful, they would say Everybody pulled together and they had a good time Now nothing seems to get done Joe and

Bill have had a falling out and things are going badly We need good old Harry When he was here we were able to work together

A MEMBER LEAVES AND A NEW MEMBER TAKES HIS PLACE

When a member was removed from an organization with stable roles and another member added, a period of testing resulted The new man did not take over the role of the member who left the organization Rather, he went through a period of working out a suitable role, and in the process some of the remaining roles were reshuffled

In short, the study of the effect of changing personnel in a work group, by adding, removing, or adding and removing members indicates that an entire role structure is threatened and sometimes changed Typically, changing personnel results in a period of role instability and struggle that surprises and frustrates the members When the people in the organization are unaware of the necessity of such a period of reshuffling they often respond by blaming the new member for their problems However, when the members of the test-tube groups are taught the principles of group process, they go through the process of reshuffling but they can tolerate the stresses and strains and are often able to speed up the acceptance of the new member

Effect of Unsatisfactory Role Performance

Members of newly formed test-tube groups find the social indeterminacy hard to live with, and consequently they drive hard to establish roles Sometimes in their eagerness to fit people into place they force a member into a role on scanty evidence, and as the group continues the members become dissatisfied with the way the person is performing When the members become dissatisfied they act in accordance with their feelings The most overt evidence of this attitude will be direct resistance to the role of the unsatisfactory member This is almost the opposite mechanism by which they worked with the member to achieve a role in the beginning Now, they extinguish the role by punishing the member when he plays the part

If member E is being funny, the member who perceives that E is not playing the role to his satisfaction will stop laughing He may even begin to groan and show his dissatisfaction openly If this is not sufficient to stop E, he may become antagonistic and say to E, "Why don't you shut up? You aren't as funny as you think you are"

If the emerged leader begins to lose support, the first danger signals are manifested by decreasing compliance with his directions In the army the dissatisfaction with the leadership resulted in the widespread practice of what was called "goldbricking," which meant not doing anything more than absolutely necessary to keep from being put on KP In the experimental group, goldbricking is often followed by outright noncompliance At this point the noncomplying member often pleads a communication "breakdown" to excuse his failure to follow directions "I did not know *I* was supposed to do that," he asserts A number of so-called communication breakdowns in the groups studied at Minnesota turned out to be smoke screens to hide the resentment of members toward a bossy leader

When other members of the group discover that a leader is being resisted, they often step forward to challenge his leadership, when they are supported in this attack, the leader may lose his role No sooner is he deposed than the group repeats the pattern of role emergence once again until they settle upon a new leader Meantime, the conflict involved in deposing the leader and finding a new one strains the social ties that bind the group together The deposed leader and the man who led the attack upon his role may find themselves involved in a "personality conflict" with the result that they often grow to dislike one another

If we understand the process by which roles develop in groups, we understand the roots of so-called personality conflicts They do not stem from the way a member talks or combs his hair—although the deposed leader may suggest that his dislike of the man who led the charge on his role is based on such things The real source of the conflict lies in his attempt to hold onto his high status role in the group. With the old leader eliminated it might seem that the man who led the group in removing him would be the new leader. This is not the case The role of leader is now open, the leading remaining candidates must now contend for it

The Effect of Appointing a Leader

In some of the case studies the group was given some structure by the appointment of a leader One of the members was designated as leader and then the groups were given tasks to perform as were the leaderless discussion groups Appointing a leader did not keep the group from a period of testing Indeed, *the appointed leaders often did not emerge as the natural leaders* Even though a member was appointed leader, he still had to demonstrate his talents for the group, but they either reinforced or resisted his leadership moves in much the same way

that they responded to members contending for leadership in the initially leaderless discussion group

Appointing a leader did have several interesting effects on the basic patterns of leader emergence, however First, the appointed leaders uniformly began the group sessions by acting as they thought leaders ought to act They took charge and tried to structure the group's work The same pattern appeared when the members found themselves in the midst of a difficult struggle over leadership, they evaded the problem by electing a person who was not in contention Very often, after a particularly acrimonious session filled with role struggles, a group will decide that it needs a leader or a chairman to "give it direction" The members will then elect as leader a member previously eliminated as unsuitable for the role and will often choose a quiet, uninvolved, or withdrawn person Usually they report that they picked this person because he was "neutral" or because he would not "take sides" with either of the leading contenders When such a neutral and quiet member is elected leader he immediately *begins to act like a leader* However, none of the contenders for the position supports him, and usually within a matter of minutes the elected leader gives up any attempt to continue in the role

The second effect of assigning a leader was to speed up the emergence of the natural leader when the members saw the assigned leader as the best man for the job If he was the member who would have emerged during the natural course of events, assigning him the position hastened the process and eased the strains of the role struggle In the case studies where this took place the group's cohesiveness and productivity were enhanced by assignment of the leader The contenders for leadership who lost out to him did not lose much face in the process The other members breathed a sigh of relief when they discovered that their leader was a man they could cheerfully follow As a result the structure stabilized quickly,

A third effect of assigning a leader was to slow down the process of the emergence of a natural leader in those cases where the assigned leader proved unsatisfactory to the group The assigned leader acted like a leader, was resisted, deposed, and then a new leadership struggle was initiated, which resulted in the emergence of another member as leader The pattern here was quite analogous to the situation in which a member emerges as a leader in a leaderless discussion group and then is perceived as unsatisfactory In these cases the group's cohesiveness and productivity were impaired by the assignment of a leader The assigned leader who failed to emerge as the natural leader lost a great deal of face, and the group had to find a productive role for him or be plagued with a disgruntled member in a formal position of leadership

Six Steps to Leadership

From many case studies we have distilled a profile of the behavior that is likely to result in the assumption of leadership Of course, even if a person does all of the things we suggest, he may not become the leader if another individual acts and speaks in a way that is more appealing to the others in the group. This is unlikely, however, because few people understand the complex dynamics of group process, and still fewer have become competent in these techniques

1 *Do not play the role of manipulator* A person will be eliminated as leader if his behavior is such that the others perceive him as a manipulator When an individual utilizes the people in the group for his personal ends, he should realize that he will have to relinquish the role of leader and accept another

We all belong to many groups that we do not need to manipulate and where we are sincerely interested in our collective welfare and can work for the good of all On those occasions an individual can hope to emerge as the leader if he forgets the personal desires that require getting his way at the expense of the others or which would lead him to force through his ideas at the cost of endangering group objectives

Ideally, the person who would emerge as the leader should be sincerely and completely dedicated to the welfare of the enterprise If he is not, and if he has ulterior purposes, the chances are that he will be found out and will not be selected to lead The sum total of all members' interaction and communication is in the direction of eliminating the inept and the manipulators and leaving as leader a capable member who is most involved in the group effort

2 *Be willing to pay the price* To emerge as the natural leader of a group an individual must want leadership badly enough to be willing to do the necessary work this position requires Almost every member of the groups we have studied wanted to be leader This is not surprising considering the rewards of leadership, the desire for important positions of command is universal However, the number of people who want to be leader in a given group badly enough to work "above and beyond the call of duty" is somewhat smaller Individuals who emerge as natural leaders work hard for the group at every opportunity They often perform low status tasks with enthusiasm and show by their example that the task undertaken is vitally important to them They are willing to make personal sacrifices and thereby demonstrate their willingness to pay the price of leadership

Contrary to the popular stereotype of leader personality, the member who emerges as a leader does not shun arousing resentment and is willing to take criticism It is seldom the best-liked person who emerges as leader The group requires the leader to make the tough decisions President Truman supposedly remarked about the Presidency, "The buck stops here" Certainly, this holds true for the work group When painful decisions have to be made the group will expect the leader to make them, for example, decisions that require unequal distribution of materials or that involve unequal sacrifice necessary for the good of the group When he makes such decisions he is bound to arouse some resentment However, if he fails to make them, the group usually takes refuge in some device such as an equal division of resources or of sacrifice For example, if a merit pay increase is advisable, the leader normally decides who will get what raises If he does not, the group will divide up the available money equally rather than award it on merit

3 *Talk up* If a person wishes to emerge as the leader of a group, he must demonstrate an active interest in the group's work He has to speak up and make his contribution For a time, researchers in small groups thought that the member who talked the *most* would emerge as the leader More discriminating research methods have revealed that this is not the case, although members who do not talk up generally are eliminated early as possible leaders because others believe the quiet person to be uninterested in the group and uninvolved in its welfare Thus, if one wants to become a leader he must talk up The quantity is not quite as important as what he says, however His words must indicate an active commitment to the group, a concern and consideration for the other members as people, and an understanding of the group's purpose The member who talks a great deal but seems to be self-centered, or whose comments seem inflexible or uninformed, does not emerge as leader

4 *Do your homework* If one wishes to emerge as the leader, he must know what is going on and how issues relate to the group's function and structure Members who emerge as leaders have sensible, practical ideas and state them clearly They possess information that helps the group When the situation demands facts, the man who can provide them in usable form is marked as a potential leader It is imperative to plan for the good of the group and, if need be, to put in extra time working out ways to improve the organization's ability to achieve its objectives Members who become leaders demonstrate to the others that they can provide workable and efficient directions to guide the group's activities

5 *Give credit to others* Members who emerge as leaders do not worry about who gets the credit for work or for ideas Indeed, they often give the credit that is offered them to some of the other members or to the entire group People who worry about recognition that *their* plan, or *their* way, or *their* ideas were finally adopted by the group do not emerge in command People do not want to work for the "glory" of their leader, but they are often quite willing to work for the glory of their group The member who takes all the credit, even though some others did some or much of the work, is seldom influential

6 *Raise the status of other members* Closely related to the fact that leaders do not worry about getting credit for their work is their tendency to raise the status of other members People who emerge as leaders compliment others when the latter do something for the good of all By their talk and manner they indicate that other members are significant people making important contributions to group welfare They sincerely seek out ways to make other people feel important In short, they are honestly disinterested in whether they emerge at the top of the pecking order or not—so long as the team does well

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The Total Speech-Communication Context

WORK GROUPS AND FORMAL ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

CHAPTER 5

We are now ready to inspect the total speech-communication pattern of the modern organization When the work group is placed into its organizational context certain modifications take place that have important effects on in-group communication Not only that, but the nature of inter-group communications is influenced by the dynamics involved

The task of this chapter is to relate the operation of the small work groups to the functioning of the entire organizational system The first step in that task is to connect the small work groups with one another and relate them to the parent organization and to describe the way these relationships develop and function To demonstrate the integration of the small task-oriented group discussed in Chapter 4 into the organizational structures developed in Chapters 2 and 3, we will tell the fictional story of Invention Incorporated

The Fable of Invention Incorporated

Five neighbors on Girard Street are playing poker in the basement recreation room of an advertising executive In addition to the

host there is a lawyer, a psychiatrist, a stockbroker, and a pediatrician. During a break in the game someone observes that there is an unusual combination of training and talent gathered around the table.

The group begins to expand along the lines suggested by that observation, and the advertising man remarks that with this much talent combined they ought to be able to dream up a number of successful money-making schemes. The brainstorming session is on. The lawyer immediately falls in with the suggestion and starts to plan the formation of a corporation. The next morning it hits the stockbroker that the castle-building at the poker table the night before has significant potential. He phones the others and all of them meet for lunch. The plan still sounds good to the advertising executive and the lawyer, although the doctors are skeptical. Nonetheless they all agree to meet for lunch several times a month to discuss possible ways to make money. They also think up the name Invention Incorporated. For several months they meet and propose a number of ideas but none of them seems sufficiently practical. Then one day the doctors, who have gradually become enthusiastic about the potential of Invention Incorporated, hit upon the notion of developing a line of toys "scientifically" designed to improve the emotional health of the child. The psychiatrist and pediatrician team up to work out a series of such toys. The advertising executive sees a campaign aimed at parents and grandparents that stresses the emotional and mental health angle. He thinks that promoting the theme that by the age of six the child's personality is formed will sell such a line of toys.

The doctors develop two toys. One is Sadie the Sibling Rival. Sadie is a large child-sized doll suitable for hitting and kicking. She is equipped with a loud crying and wailing mechanism and designed expressly for the child that needs to express its hostility in a healthy way. The second toy is Randy the Robot. Randy is an electrically operated lifelike toy. If the child barks orders and at the same time pushes the proper button, Randy will walk, stop, turn around, run, and fall down at command. Randy is designed especially for the youngest child in a family and can be ordered about to relieve the child's frustrations because as the youngest he often has no one to "boss."

The stockbroker contacts a local toy manufacturer about producing several prototypes, and the lawyer patents the two toys. After several tries the manufacturer produces models that seem attractive, sturdy, and functional. The local manufacturer is willing to contract to produce the toys, and the advertising man prepares an attractive brochure promoting the stock. The broker takes care of getting the stock marketed, and the lawyer makes legal arrangements for incorporation. The group must now decide on the formal corporate structure. They must pick a

president, vice-presidents, a treasurer, and other officers The problem is an easy one however, for during the course of their poker games and luncheon meetings a clear and stable role structure had emerged in their work group When they select the advertising executive as president, the two doctors as vice-presidents in charge of research and development, the lawyer as vice-president in charge of production, and the stockbroker as treasurer, they are simply formalizing their informal role structure

Invention Incorporated now has both a *formal* and *informal* role structure At this point in the development of the organization these two structures are the same The name of the formal position is also the name of the informal role

Invention Incorporated offers its stock on the local market and it sells moderately well They now have working capital and they borrow enough additional money to go into production For the time being the officers plan to run the corporation as a part-time hobby However, the advertising man hires a colleague at the agency to be a part-time sales manager They sell the first order of the toys to department and toy stores in the local area and, using the modest profit, they borrow more money and take a flier They place a much larger order for the two proven sellers and develop three more toys They now hire a full-time secretary and clerk-typist (two new formal positions) and open an office in a downtown office building The job of selling the line is too big for the part-time sales manager and he hires two full-time salesmen

The time of decision is the pre-Christmas period Invention Incorporated is operating on a razor-thin margin They have all of their capital and considerable borrowed money tied up in a huge inventory of toys The result of the pre-Christmas sales surpasses their fondest hopes The entire inventory is sold out, and still inquiries from buyers around the country continue to come in

Invention Incorporated shows an incredible profit for its first two years of operation After their big success at the first Christmas season, the board of directors has a meeting in which it faces some difficult decisions The advertising executive agrees to resign his job at the agency to assume full-time duties as president, bringing his colleague with him as full-time sales manager. They expand their office and promotion force, and the stockbroker leaves his position to assume full-time duties as production manager The next year sees a continued expansion of sales and they rent a plant and begin producing their own toys The production manager now becomes plant manager and hires three assistants, a line supervisor, a procurement officer, and a supervisor of research and development

The line supervisor has two foremen, each supervising a work

group of ten women who assemble the toys The procurement officer has an assistant and a secretary and two office workers, the supervisor of research and development has two assistants The ideas still come largely from the original five-man group Figure 8 indicates the formal

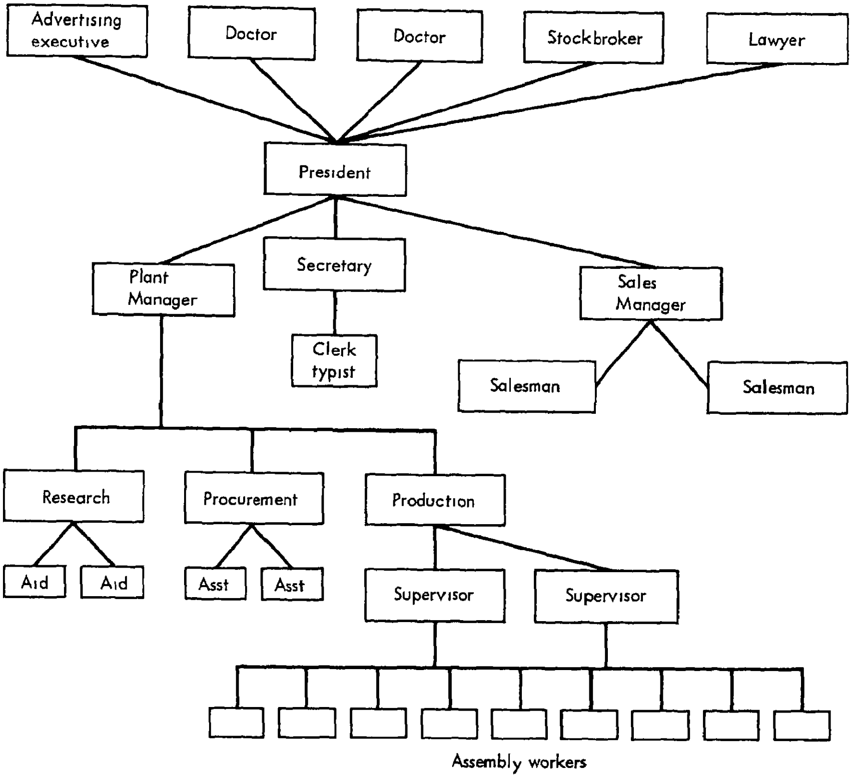

Figure 8 Table of Organization for Invention Incorporated

organization of Invention Incorporated as the firm has evolved Of course the organization keeps changing and the informal organization does not fit so neatly into the boxes of the table of organization as one might think Small work groups are evolving and interacting and stabilizing (or failing to stabilize) roles in the way described in Chapter 4 whenever new people are brought together to work on specific jobs The office force that the president sets up soon becomes a small task-oriented work group The workers and supervisors who are placed in the plant to assemble the toys soon become small groups with an informal role structure To be sure, a woman on the assembly line will not be able to emerge as a leader in the production division because of the rigidity in the formal structure that makes it difficult for her to establish the neces-

sary lines of communication with the supervisors and the production manager Within such formal restrictions, however, the work of Invention Incorporated is done by a number of small task-oriented work groups that function in the same way as the basic model developed in Chapter 4

In a sense the table of organization of Invention Incorporated reflects the role structure that emerged first in the small group that formed the company and then in each group of the company that was added to the founding group The formal structure is the fossilized remains of the first living informal structures of the organization

The demands of Invention Incorporated upon the time of the board of directors continue to grow with the success of the company The psychiatrist finally decides that he can no longer be an active member of the board He feels his first duty is to his profession and so he withdraws from active participation The research and development section is crippled when he leaves, for his role has largely been in the area of providing new ideas for toys Two new men are hired to "beef up" this section In a short while the remaining four members of the board elect the sales manager to fill the vacancy on the board of directors The board undergoes a rather severe role struggle to reshuffle positions, and the other doctor decides to withdraw from active participation also Before he leaves, however, he and the sales manager have a falling out, and the sales manager, who has an excellent offer from another bigger toy company, accepts it and resigns The research and development section bogs down and the president decides that they are no longer pulling their weight despite the two new members

Invention Incorporated has added salesmen until at the time of the resignation of the sales manager they have a force of five men They searched for several months to find a suitable replacement and in the meantime they appoint their top salesman as acting sales manager Finally, they hire a highly recommended sales manager from another toy company Within two months the salesman who has been acting sales manager comes to the president with a list of grievances from three of the five salesmen and threatens that all three will resign if something is not done about the new sales manager

An expert in organizational communication is hired to examine the possible causes of the difficulties that have recently developed within Invention Incorporated He makes an intensive study for several months and finds the following communication problems within the organization

COMMUNICATION PROBLEM 1

After the psychiatrist left the firm, the head of the research and development section could not find out what was expected of him He

tried to get some guidelines from the president, but the president did not give him adequate directions He tried to talk informally to the pediatrician, but to no avail He was given two new men but he did not know how they were to fit into his unit or how they were to be used He had enjoyed good lines of communication to the psychiatrist and they had always worked out new projects together Without the psychiatrist to turn to he felt lost

COMMUNICATION PROBLEM 2

The two new men in the research and development section were disillusioned with Invention Incorporated They were sorry they had joined a new and rapidly expanding firm One of them was particularly disturbed by a feeling of disorganization that he thought dominated the research and development section He had a number of ideas on how the section should be reorganized and the work improved However, when he developed a report outlining his suggestions—on his own time—and submitted it to the section manager the report was buried He never did get a satisfactory response In fact, he reported that the section manager refused to discuss it He also felt that the two men in the research and development section who had been hired prior to his joining the organization were cold and surly He could not talk with them He and the other new man had two projects they would like to work on, but they were unable to get the green light to get started He was seriously considering going over the section manager's head directly to the president of the company

COMMUNICATION PROBLEM 3

The leader of the disgruntled salesmen was disturbed because he had not been able to talk with, or understand the directives of, the new sales manager The salesmen simply did not know what to expect next He thought that the entire corporation was going to pieces, that the lines of communication were down throughout the organization His former boss started to have trouble from the moment he joined the board of directors When the ringleader was acting sales manager he had some trouble getting through to the president, but after several weeks things had gone along more smoothly However, with the appointment of the new sales manager he simply was not informed about what was going on or what the company was planning to do

Of course, the expert discovered other communication problems, but these three are representative of those that can be understood and solved by the application of research results from investigations into small groups

The first problem clearly stems from the reshuffling of roles within the research and development section and the board of directors as a result of the psychiatrist leaving the firm The pattern of communication from the board of directors (the original group) to the research and development section was broken The original group had worked out a stable and efficient pattern of communication The president could rely on the psychiatrist to carry through with the head of research and development and "fill him in" on all important information

When the psychiatrist left, the role structure of the board of directors was also upset, and with the addition of the former sales manager the tensions increased The president and the pediatrician suddenly found themselves facing several new and unexpected crises When the head of the research and development section tried to find out what was expected from him by asking the president, he was frustrated partly because the president did not know the sort of briefing he had previously received from the psychiatrist and also because the president looked upon his request for information as an unwelcome intrusion because he was swamped by many other problems

The research and development section was disrupted further by the addition of new personnel One of the new men began pressing the department head with new plans and ideas to impress upper management with his skills The department manager found such "pushing" particularly unsettling since he was undergoing a period of role instability related to the change in the board of directors He, therefore, tended to ignore or bury the suggestions

The sales division illustrates the problems of a new manager appointed from outside the work group The new sales manager at Invention Incorporation responded with inappropriate behavior, during the period of the shakedown cruise, when the salesmen were testing to see if they were willing to follow his leadership, he began to employ sanctions that eliminated him as the leader of the group The problem was intensified because in the interim before his appointment one of the leaders of the group had been designated as acting sales manager The new manager should have been aware that he had a leader of the group to deal with, for this reason he must use the right approach in order to manage the sales division successfully In this regard the new manager failed completely

To add to the troubles of communication in the sales division, the acting sales manager and his former boss maintained strong, informal lines of communication during the period when the latter was taking on his new duties on the board of directors All of the tensions and disruptions associated with absorbing the new member of the board were reported to him, this added to his general feeling that the entire corpora-

tion was going to pieces and that the lines of communication were down all through the company

The Formal Organization

The lesson taught by the story of Invention Incorporated is not completely explained by our analysis of the informal work groups that develop to do the various jobs required for the success of the organization When the original five men incorporated and provided for various positions such as president and vice-president, they created a *formal* organization When they added new positions, the formal organization grew until it reached the size diagramed in Figure 8 By this time Invention Incorporated was so large that it was inconvenient, if not impossible, to operate the entire organization as though it were a small task-oriented group Members of the organization simply did not have enough contact with other members to form an impression about them Certainly, they did not interact enough to establish informal roles

The formal *positions* began to function much as roles do in the informal group What the organization expected from a given member and what that member could expect from the organization were spelled out in the formal position Sometimes these precepts were written out and codified The duties and responsibilities of the sales manager were written up and the new sales manager was given a copy For other members of the organization, particularly the new people on the production line, duties were outlined by the supervisor in an interview Because a member held a *formal position* he knew what he was supposed to do The status relationships of the various positions were indicated in the table of organization as well The production supervisor had a higher status position than the line supervisor The line supervisor had a higher status than the workers on the production line

One way to look at an effort to communicate is to think of it as an attempt to predict response The formal structure of an organization provides information that can help an individual predict the response to a given bit of communication If the communicator knows the formal structure of Invention Incorporated, he can infer some things about the responses inherent in each position, regardless of *who is filling the position at a given time* Of course, to make a complete prediction he would need to know the informal roles of the members within the work groups However, many members of the organization cannot know of the informal structure, and the formal organization then becomes indispensable as an aid to communication

THE FORMAL POSITION

Each position in the table of organization has certain tasks associated with it These may include such things as dividing up the work and making task assignments The position may carry with it the selection of new members and the removal of old members—hiring and firing Quite often the position carries with it certain sanctions—rewards and punishments—to aid in performing these duties Typically there is a rigidity in the formal position Some things the member occupying that position may do and some things he may not do Whether he fails to do what he must do or does things he must not do, the organization will punish or remove him in either case, because he is not doing his job or has overstepped the bounds The duties required by the formal position can be thought of as *responsibilities* If these duties are not taken care of, the individual occupying the position will be called to an accounting

Despite the rigidity of the clearly spelled-out responsibilities each position has a certain amount of inherent flexibility The organization simply cannot list *all* of the "must do's" and the "must not do's," and so there are some "may do" and "may not do" opportunities This flexibility explains the development of informal roles with the work groups The natural tendency of every small group to have its members specialize and develop roles is given an opportunity to develop—somewhat restricted by the formal organization—because the responsibilities of each position cannot be completely specified Organizations, of course, differ as to the amount of flexibility their formal structure will allow Where the list of "must do's" and "must not do's" for each position is long and clearly specified, the development of informal role structures is hindered to a greater degree than in those organizations where duties are less clearly defined

Associated with the duties and sanctions of each position is a certain amount of *authority* If a communicator knows and understands the formal structure of Invention Incorporated, he can predict the amount of *authority* any individual has by finding out what position he fills The authority goes with the position If he knows that he is talking to the president of the company or to the plant manager, he can estimate the authority of that individual no matter *who* the president happens to be or who holds the position of plant manager The authority inherent in the position of sales manager remained the same, even though three men held the position during the early years of the life of Invention Incorporated

Authority may be exercised without effect or it may be neglected

That is, the president may exercise his authority and not get the desired results On the other hand, the president may choose not to use his authority We must distinguish between authority and *power* The individual who holds a position adds the dimension of power to the formal structure We noted previously that *power is the effective exercise of authority* It is a function of the authority of the position *combined with the informal role the individual develops in the work groups to which he belongs*

PREDICTING BEHAVIOR ON THE BASIS OF THE FORMAL POSITION

If a person wishes to communicate with an individual within his own organization or within another organization and he knows very little about the man himself, the communicator can often discover something about the basic organization He should be alert to the cues that reflect status In general he must be careful not to communicate, either verbally or nonverbally, that he feels the receiver has more authority than he does, in fact, have The wise communicator, therefore, makes a careful estimate as to the authority inherent in the position before he begins to talk to the person holding that position The vice-president who is called "president" or treated as though he were the president will be irritated The infantry captain who is called "colonel" will soon grow angry Members of organizations expect to be treated in a way commensurate with their position, but not as though they had more authority than they actually have Perhaps, treating people with too much deference makes them think the speaker is making fun of them. Perhaps, they are reminded that they do not have as much authority, in fact, as they wish they had At any rate, the wise communicator estimates the amount of authority in a given position and communicates with the man in that position with that in mind

Even more dangerous for the success of the communication is the situation where the speaker gives the receiver of the message the impression that his actual authority is not recognized The recruit who approaches his company commander and asks to see the major because he wants to talk to "somebody with some authority around here" soon learns this lesson on KP

Troublesome Communication Situations

When the informal role structure approximates the formal table of organization the communicative efficiency of the organization is high

Of course, the members of the organization must have the requisite communicative skills to make maximum use of an ideal environment But such an organization does provide a context in which communication can take place with a minimum of friction from the organizational structure

The formal structure is static The informal work groups that develop and change with changes in personnel and working conditions are dynamic Frequently the informal organization, the power and esteem that members earn in that organization, departs from the formal organization The map no longer fits the realities One can no longer discover the power of a man by finding out his title When this happens communication problems often follow

A common situation is the one where the man who has the authority of his position in the organization does not have power because of his role in the group For example, if a supervisor has the responsibility for meeting certain production levels but does not have the power to implement his plan of action nor the power to have his orders followed, he is likely to become embroiled in a communication "breakdown"

When a supervisor does not have the power within the work group, some other member does That means that someone in the group has more power than authority This is a second dangerous situation The formal organization calls upon the supervisor for an accounting if the production standards are not met Although he is responsible for them, the group turns to the member who is their leader for an accounting in regard to production standards

The two members, the formal leader and the informal leader, may work out an arrangement whereby the man in the formal position becomes a figurehead The supervisor then goes through the motions of performing his job while the informal leader actually does the work In return, the informal leader protects the supervisor by seeing to it that production standards as well as other duties of the supervisor are fulfilled, and the organization does not penalize him

Often, of course, the man in the formal position wants power and esteem as well as authority and prestige and will try to use his sanctions to enforce his decisions upon the group If he does, he becomes embroiled in a power conflict with the member whose informal role has the power to enforce decisions The group will fight back with the weapons at its command, for example, malingering and sabotage To some extent the situation in the procurement section at Information Systems illustrates the problem When Bill Johnson failed to push hard for a change in the new office facilities for the buyers, Harry Rider stepped into the leadership vacuum and began to get support Bill

Johnson was the manager, but Harry Rider had emerged as leader of the five dissident buyers

The man who has the authority without the power is a difficult man to work for in any organization He is insecure He knows that he is not in control and fears that upper management will discover that he is not the leader of his unit He tries very hard to appear efficient and on top of things He tends to supervise all work very closely and to worry about things going wrong He makes elaborate plans to assure efficient operations The result is that his subordinates feel more and more resentment toward his style of management Rapidly expanding organizations like Information Systems often provide examples of authority outstripping power Henry Wolfson is a case in point Wolfson joined the firm early, and since he had seniority he found himself promoted very rapidly As he moved up the management ladder he began to feel insecure He was never certain in his own mind that he had earned his position or that he could handle it properly This accounted for his continual activity and the perpetual air of crisis that surrounded his office

COMMUNICATION PROBLEMS RESULTING FROM A NEW MEMBER

In Chapter 4 we saw how adding a new member to a work group with stable roles resulted in a reshuffling of positions The process of absorbing a new member into a group is painful, even for established organizations Most organizations have a good deal of turnover of personnel, and certain procedures are often used to minimize the wear and tear on the members when additional people join the group One device is to force the new members to begin on the lowest level of group functions They are assigned to the least attractive duties and will have to "work up" to the better positions Another device is the use of *seniority* to protect the older members The group arbitrarily limits the amount of participation they will allow the new member The organization restricts the new man's ability to assume some of the high status functions of the group The freshman senator in a legislative body is given a few relatively unimportant committee assignments He is expected to watch and wait until he is accepted by the leader of the body If he speaks too soon, too brashly, or too often he is chastised by those members with more seniority Similarly, members of industrial firms are expected to build up seniority before they are given attractive assignments In fraternal organizations new members are often placed into a special category where their rights and duties are limited

Even within these restrictions, however, there is always room for the development of an informal role within the work group The new men must still find their place in these informal groups, and a role struggle can be expected even though seniority may restrict it to the lower rungs of the status ladder When there is a turnover of personnel and new men are added to the organization, a certain number of communication problems associated with this role struggle can be expected If the member of such an organization is alert for these problems, he is in a much better position to plan for them and handle them when they do arise

A new manager *must go through a period of testing* until he establishes a role for himself in the informal groups within his department He finds his role according to the basic principles explained in Chapter 4 When he finally does assume a role, he will do a slightly different set of tasks than the manager before him, this means a reshuffling of roles all down the line If his unit is large, the greatest anxiety and tension and most communication breakdown will take place among those next in line at the upper end of the informal role structure of his division The effects are often transmitted a good way down the line as well

The formal structure does provide the new manager with certain standard levers to use in emerging as the informal leader as well as the formal leader These levers include such things as the power to increase salaries, give bonuses, promote, assign jobs and vacations, the right to punish tardiness, malingering, and poor work performances Such important powers might seem to give the manager an insurmountable advantage in the competition with other members of the group who hold positions of less authority and status Wisely used, by a man who understands the basic model of leadership emergence, this can be the case Quite often, however, the prerogative to reward and punish group members, which is part of formal leadership, turns out to be a handicap rather than a help

Here is a typical pattern that describes the way a new manager can fail to use his powers wisely He knows he is a marked man The organization holds him responsible for the work of his group His supervisor watches him carefully to see how he will conduct himself The new manager feels this pressure, and for this reason he tries to do an exceptionally good job and thus prove himself to his superiors The men in his work group also watch him with great care Will he be a man they can follow? If the new manager begins to make strong and decisive leadership moves, he can expect to get disappointing responses from his members He can anticipate considerable "misunderstanding" as a tactic of resisting an order from someone in authority Such resistance can of

course be punished, but if the reason for not doing the job lies truly in a communication breakdown, the boss cannot in all fairness punish the man. The new supervisor should expect some goldbricking and occasional open resistance. To a man who is on trial and eager to prove his efficiency such responses from his men may lead to frustration and anger. The new manager has arrived at the moment of truth. If he can control his anger and ask himself, "What have I done wrong?" he may be able to mend his fences and start to rebuild a role of leadership that will win him the esteem his position demands. If he lashes back and begins to pull the levers by which he can punish the members who do not support his leadership moves, he will start a spiral effect that results in further goldbricking, more crises, less production, and trouble with upper management. If he panics and decides that the trouble with his group is that he has not been firm enough, he may wildly put the pressure on his men. He will lay down the law, read off the lazy members, make sure that his directions are crystal clear, and supervise the most minute details of the work.

The members of his unit will then certainly reject him as their leader. They will tend to follow the man who can best cope with the new manager, who by now has become a scapegoat for the group.

The new manager who starts this toboggan ride will soon reach a point where more of his time and energy is devoted to struggling with members of his unit than to his work. The struggle is profoundly disturbing to all members. Their morale declines. They have difficulty getting the problem off their minds. They talk about it incessantly. They vent considerable spleen on "him," and on the members who are in his camp, and they plot and plan ways to get back at "him" and those who support "him." The problem in the sales division at Invention Incorporated exemplifies this sad state of affairs.

The Organization and Communicative Effectiveness

Communication, as we have repeatedly said, involves a prediction of behavior. To make the most accurate predictions, the communicator must understand the principles of speech-communication and be skillful in listening, motive analysis, and speaking. Given an understanding and these skills, he must next examine the informal role structure of the work groups within the organization. Finally, he must assess the influence and restrictions of the formal organization upon the people with whom he communicates.

If he is a poor listener and poor speaker, an understanding of the dynamics of small work groups or the nature of formal organizations

will not enable a man to be a successful communicator Given the requisite skills in listening, speaking, and motive analysis, a man with an understanding of group process and the organization's effect on communication will be able to function at peak efficiency Encouraging stable roles in the informal work groups and keeping the formal structure as close to the informal roles as possible will cut down the friction that inevitably develops when a static structure attempts to mold dynamic reality

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Improving Communications in the Small Group

CHAPTER 6

We have made some references in previous chapters to problem situations and have noted in passing where improvements in communication can be made But our main concern has been to provide a thorough analysis of the process of speech-communication as it functions in the structure of the organization In this chapter and in Chapter 7 we will provide concrete advice on how to improve communication within small work groups and how to plan and run more efficient organizational meetings Part II will provide basic theory underlying interpersonal communication, listening, and persuasion as well as specific ways to improve personal speech-communication skills

COHESIVENESS

Cohesiveness Defined

In small group communication *the more cohesive the group, the more efficient the communication within the group* To fully explore the implications of the basic connection between group cohesiveness

and communication, we must begin with an explanation of the nature of cohesiveness

A highly cohesive group is one in which most of the members willingly work for the good of the group They exhibit a great deal of team spirit They recognize the group as an entity of importance to them personally The members of a cohesive group reflect the spirit of the motto of the *Three Musketeers,* "All for one and one for all"

Highly cohesive production groups increase output by taking the initiative to help one another, they distribute the work load efficiently in times of stress Workers who are supervised as individuals tend to stand around and wait for assignments They feel that they are only responsible for the work assigned directly to them They are not concerned about the work of others in their unit The members of groups with little cohesiveness tend to "keep their noses clean" and "look out for number one" Highly cohesive groups, on the other hand, have members who volunteer to help one another because they feel responsible for attaining the goals of their unit

One of the manager's objectives in the modern organization is to help his group develop feelings of loyalty and direct the resultant cohesiveness toward the goals of the organization The manager must always keep cohesiveness in mind as he goes about his supervisory tasks If he does not, he may find that by concentrating on individuals within his unit, he has unwittingly destroyed team spirit and encouraged role struggles, tensions, and backbiting For example, dealing with individuals may result in the appearance of playing favorites and the problems associated with what we called in grade-school days, "teacher's pets"

Cohesiveness and Feedback

Cohesiveness is directly related to the effectiveness of speech-communication within the group Cohesiveness results in a greater desire among the members to communicate and it *creates a climate that encourages feedback*

Group cohesiveness facilitates feedback by reducing the inhibitions of people that block full, free, and honest give-and-take In one study of group communication at the University of Minnesota we established a standard for good communication The criterion was that the person who knew the least about a central topic before the meeting should know as much as the most knowledgeable member after the topic was discussed We then investigated the question How many of the groups under study met the standard? Observers found that none of the groups even approximated the criterion They also discovered

that the main reason for the failure to communicate *basic information* (not complicated theoretical concepts or controversial positions) was that the person who did not know did not ask for further information Individuals did not provide an opportunity for the knowledgeable member to share his information They did not say, "I am sorry but I do not know about that Could you fill me in?"

Next, we studied the reasons for the failure to ask for basic information One big reason was that the person did not want to appear "ignorant" and lose standing Often people would pretend to know more than they actually did rather than ask for information Chapter 4 indicates why appearing ignorant is damaging to an individual striving for an influential role Clearly, when the role structure of a group is unstable, the members will be reluctant to appear uninformed

Another reason why so few questions were asked was that members were afraid that they would insult the person giving the information if they asked for further clarification This factor is particularly important when a status difference separates the informed person from the one who needs to know Thus, the subordinate often fails to ask for more explanation and information from his supervisor because he does not want to imply that the boss did not give a clear explanation

In an organizational setting in the field we discovered one additional reason The person who does not understand a message sometimes fails to ask for further information and clarification because of lack of interest Sometimes members of an organization get into the habit of holding conferences and meetings whether the meetings are needed or not If the members feel the sessions are simply "busy work," that is, time wasters, they often remain silent to hurry the meeting to adjournment

Increasing the cohesiveness of a work group strikes at all of these problems by creating a climate that encourages the person who needs more knowledge to ask for it In the cohesive group every person knows his role and is secure in it A person's position is not threatened by the admission that he does not know about a matter of concern to his unit Indeed, the cohesive group rewards the individual who asks for the information needed to do a job The knowledgeable member does not feel slighted or insulted, nor does he feel his status threatened by a request for further clarification and information.

The highly cohesive football team rewards the guard who asks the quarterback to repeat information in the huddle because he must know his assignment if the play is to work The quarterback, in turn, is not insulted by the question because he knows that without the help of the guard his job will be more difficult

Finally, highly cohesive groups use their meetings to get things

done Their meetings tend to be noisy, full of joking, personal byplay, disagreement, and argument They often run overtime Few important decisions are made without thorough discussion with every man having his say The highly cohesive group can afford disagreement because members know that any hard feelings caused by disagreements will be patched up after a decision is made

Groups with little cohesiveness, on the other hand, often have meetings that are quiet, polite, boring, and dull The general attitude of the members is reflected in their posture, their sighs, and their yawns They seem to say, "Let's get this meeting over with I have more important things to do" The sessions contain little disagreement and hardly any interaction Even important decisions are handled quickly

IMPROVING COHESIVENESS IN THE WORK GROUP

Cohesiveness and the Comparison Group

Cohesiveness is a dynamic feature of group process An organization that is highly cohesive this year—an effective, hard-hitting, well-regarded group—may suffer a series of reverses, lose personnel, and experience a drop in cohesiveness, so that within five years it is in serious trouble

The work group is subject to constant pressures from other groups in the organization and from the parent organization itself In addition, the work group feels the influence of other organizations Some of the pressures increase cohesiveness and some reduce it For example, if the group comes in competition with similar units, the element of competition may increase cohesiveness Should the group win the competition, the result is often an increase in team spirit

The supervisor examining his work group to estimate its cohesiveness should apply the principles of group process developed in Chapter 4 to examine the prestige, status, and esteem satisfactions that an individual receives from the interpersonal relationships in his unit He must also look, however, at the other groups both within and without the parent organization that are competing for his people

The attractiveness of a leader's unit is partly dependent on the *next best group* an individual could join We will call the next best group the *comparison group* The comparison group is important because a member may leave a job and join another organization if the comparison group becomes attractive enough The case of Invention

Incorporated presents several instances of a comparison group becoming sufficiently tempting to lure a person from one assignment to another The advertising man, who joined the firm as its sales manager, is one example The psychiatrist, who finally decided not to continue as a member of the board of directors because relationships in his clinical practice were more interesting to him, is another Finally, the sales manager left Invention Incorporated because another firm seemed by comparison more inviting

In summary, every member is constantly experiencing pushes and pulls that attract him to, or repel him from, his group Some of the pressures come from within the group, some from the parent organization, and some from comparison groups in other organizations

Incentives to Group Commitment

Groups can satisfy all levels of human motivation We present a detailed analysis of human motives in Chapters 15 and 16 The analysis of motives applies to the working of groups just as it does to one or two individuals Insofar as a group provides an individual with rewards and provides them more abundantly than the next best possibility, the individual is motivated to join and remain with the group

ECONOMIC INCENTIVES

Some of the important rewards furnished by a group are economic in nature The organization may provide a member with a salary, with bonuses, and fringe benefits The individual may use money to satisfy a number of needs Hence, economic rewards are basic, readily understood, and appeal to motives that are universal

One must remember, of course, that monetary inducements are relative and are weighed against financial rewards in the comparison group If the present organization pays an individual $7,000 and the competing offer is $5,000, the pull of the group is stronger than if the comparison group were offering $6,500 If the comparison group offers $8,000 a person has an incentive to leave his group He may remain, but if he does stay, it is because of other satisfactions furnished by the group But he will not be as strongly committed as he would be were the competing financial offer not so attractive Of course, a $2,000 differential for the person drawing $7,000 per year is a more potent factor than it would be for the individual making $100,000 Studies show that wage earners believe they need 10 to 15 per cent more money regardless of their base pay

The group may also provide a person with indirect benefits They may help him make business contacts Thus, becoming a member of a country club can increase an insurance broker's sales He, therefore, becomes loyal to the club Or the group may give the member tips about bargains, or suggest ways to secure goods wholesale, they may help one another find better houses, better services, and in other indirect ways furnish fringe benefits

Just as the group may satisfy basic financial needs, it may also cost a person money to be a member He may earn less, get fewer fringe benefits, sell less insurance, etc When the group begins to be financially costly to the individual, his commitment tends to lessen

When a leader seeks to hire a man from another group, his first thought is usually to offer more money than the man is presently earning He may also use money as an incentive to encourage greater effort from those already part of his organization This could take the form of salary increases, bonuses as rewards for meeting individual quotas, for doing a particularly good job, or for a money-saving suggestion The economic rewards are basic and effective, as seen by their continued use However, money works only up to a certain level of commitment The individual whose basic economic needs are satisfied is not so strongly motivated by them When his basic money needs are met, additional money will do little to make a man work harder or be more loyal to the group Douglas M McGregor makes the point strongly with his analysis of what encourages and what dissatisfies employees McGregor suggests that monetary rewards may be a dissatisfier in that a person who feels he deserves more money than he is making will tend to be dissatisfied However, as an incentive, money is not as important as other rewards because individuals in organizations require human satisfactions they cannot buy with money

SECURITY INCENTIVES

The group can provide its members with security If the group has well established ways of working and every man knows where he fits—knows what is expected of him and what he can expect from others—he has a stable, secure social environment that is predictable and satisfying Hand in hand with security, the group can provide the individual with social rewards The group can make him feel that he belongs, that there are people in the organization who know him as a person and like and respect him for what he is Of course the group can be socially punishing as well The social structure of the group may be in constant flux A member may never know for sure what is expected of him nor what to expect from the other members of the

group One day they may be friendly, hostile the next On occasion they may be calm and pleasant, yet shortly afterward there may be a blowup and people may grow angry or sullen When the organization becomes psychologically punishing, a member may leave the group even though he may lose money in so doing

PRESTIGE AND ESTEEM INCENTIVES

Groups can provide their members with prestige and esteem in two ways First, the group can transfer its own prestige to each of its members If the group has an excellent reputation, every member of that group gains in respect Membership in an elite organization provides an individual with the high regard of others in the community

Second, the organizational work group benefits from sharing the prestige of its individual members When members are highly esteemed in the community or organization their presence enhances the reputation of all the others Quite often a voluntary organization will print the names of its most famous honorary members on its letterhead to transfer their fame—and prestige—to the group Most importantly, however, a group gains prestige by doing a good job Every work group has a purpose whether it is working on the production line or engaged in policy-making management Regardless of its particular purpose, the group gains stature in the overall organization and in the community by excelling in the successful completion of its work. If the organization is dedicated to making money, the activity that has the most prestige is that of making a substantial profit If the organization is measured in terms of service to the community, the organizations that reap the most prestige are those that accomplish the greatest service The same holds true for a given work group within the organizational framework The production group with the highest quality output is usually the one that has the greatest amount of prestige

Fluctuations in cohesiveness within work groups frequently come in cycles That is, cohesiveness may grow and result in greater effectiveness, this makes the group outstanding, which in turn increases the esteem rewards and, further, the cohesiveness As the old saying goes, nothing succeeds like success The greater the success the greater the cohesiveness, and so the cycle spirals upward Should the upward cycle be broken for any reason, however, the downward cycle begins Perhaps a failure of some magnitude causes a loss in esteem which drops the cohesiveness level Bickering and casting of blame may contribute to a further loss of efficiency, and the downward spiral is underway Elite groups must be on constant guard to prevent overconfidence and complacency from precipitating a downward cycle Leaders of efficient

groups can often stop the downward trend if they understand the theory of group process After an unexpected failure they can employ the principles in Chapter 4 to take remedial action and stop the spiral from developing Managers who understand group process will be particularly alert for difficult times when there is a change in personnel

Groups can also meet the esteem needs of individuals within their *social structure* If the social structure of the group permits a person to be highly regarded, if he has high status, he will receive much psychic income from this recognition Time and again a person who is promoted to a position of importance in an organization will work much harder The same response can come from esteem awarded by the group If his fellow workers openly recognize his ability and value him as a person, a member will be reinforced in a way that stimulates his expenditure of time and energy

We cannot stress too much one important fact for the supervisor who is managing his work group The internal, informal human relations of his unit can punish a member by holding him in low regard If the group makes it plain to some persons that they are low on the totem pole, on the bottom of the pecking order, or recruits in the rear rank, in short, unimportant to the group, it will deprive them of a minimum of needed recognition Not only that, but it will become quite clear that these *esteem needs never will be met in this group*

Much of the so-called *deadwood* in an organization that cannot be understood in terms of wages, working conditions, or ability to do the job can be explained by low group status These unfortunate individuals see no reason to produce since they know that they never will be regarded as valued and important people

ACHIEVEMENT INCENTIVES

The organization pervades our contemporary culture Everyone participates in organizations at play, at work, and at worship The need to participate in worthwhile activities that are both satisfying personally and appreciated by others is widespread Many of the jobs a person likes to do require an organizational setting to support them, hence the "instinct for workmanship" acquires a social dimension

The group can satisfy this instinct for workmanship in two ways It can provide the individual with an opportunity to do the kind of work he likes to do Also, it supplies colleagues who can evaluate and sincerely appreciate a good job

Advocates of some of the modern management theories have discovered that achievement needs are important motivators for members of organizations Management positions fulfill achievement needs,

and management personnel tends to have a greater dedication to the organization than do subordinates While the people who do the menial jobs that provide little work satisfaction strike for shorter hours, the managers routinely labor for longer than is required of them The high level of commitment and dedication is a function of the organization's ability to fulfill the esteem and achievement needs of the manager

Of course the group can deprive a member of satisfactions by negating the opportunity to achieve The member may be asked to perform tasks that he finds dull or unchallenging The Kiwanis Club may require its members to sell brooms from door to door as a fund-raising project Some Kiwanians will find this task distasteful Additional requests to do similar jobs may cause a person to become "deadwood" or to drop his membership

Even if the organization gives a person a job that is attractive, it may fail to give the individual any overt indication that the group appreciates a good job, or the appreciation may be mechanical and insincere If the supervisor habitually says, "Good job, Joe," and the members of his unit know that he says this to everybody no matter how good the job, it soon loses its effectiveness Any indication of appreciation must be *deserved* and *honest*

Indeed, the highly cohesive groups we studied at Minnesota all had established ways in which not just the leader but the entire group made it clear to a person when they thought an individual had done a particularly good job The approval was discriminating and adjusted to the significance of the member's contribution

Clearly, if one knows the ways of how a group of people can satisfy the motivation of its members, one understands much of the process by which cohesiveness is generated The supervisor who understands the factors involved in cohesiveness can appreciate the wisdom of the advice that he should think of his job as managing a work *group*

Eight Steps to Greater Cohesiveness for Your Work Group

1 *Give your group an identity* The supervisor who is preoccupied with managing individuals forgets frequently that he is in charge of a unit within the organization If the supervisor ignores the group, the men who work in his unit will tend to ignore it as well The informal groups that they join will seem to them to be separate from and perhaps antagonistic to the formal organizational structure

To build cohesiveness in a work group the manager must think in terms of the unit as a group and talk about it as a group The leader

should refer to the machining division, or the buyers, or customer engineering when he talks to his subordinates Highly cohesive groups always work out ways to confer identity on their units Sometimes these are as obvious as insignia, mascots, or nicknames No athletic coach can afford to neglect the importance of thus identifying his team The Minnesota Gophers, the Iowa Hawkeyes, the Princeton Tigers all are important means of identifiying teams of these institutions

Members of highly cohesive teams are never allowed to forget that they are part of a group that is important to them and to the entire organization Talking about "we," "our group," "our division," what "we hope to accomplish," and how "we can continue the excellent work we have done" is positive suggestion to the subordinates that they are part of a team and that the supervisor recognizes the group and is doing what he does for the good of the collective unit Talk of "you," "me," "I," will suggest just the opposite to his men If the supervisor continually stresses that "I want this to be done and I'm asking you to do this as a personal favor for me," or "if you do not do this then I will find it necessary to do such and so" will all suggest that the formal group is unimportant

2 *Build a group tradition* An excellent way to strengthen the identity of the group and emphasize its importance and permanence is to build a group tradition No sooner is the group clearly identified than things begin to happen to it The group starts to have a history. Whether it faces a crisis and fails or a challenge and wins is an event that can be recalled later and thus becomes a factor in developing a tradition Soldiers who go through hell together emerge as buddies and the informal groups of infantrymen that come through combat are highly cohesive Quite often in the process of working together as a group unusual, exciting, or funny things happen, these too can become a part of the group's tradition The group's supervisor finds the appropriate occasions to recall such past incidents He builds cohesiveness by relating group experiences because they dramatize the permanence and importance of the group

Highly cohesive work groups have traditional events or ceremonies that give the group added meaning and build loyalty For instance, the group may have a party or a ceremony to celebrate the betrothal of one of the members The supervisor can seldom force such "traditional" events, but the opportunity to develop such traditions is ever present

3 *Stress teamwork* The supervisor can build cohesiveness by stressing the importance of teamwork He can personally set the style

by accepting the basic principle that builds teamwork in professional athletics I don't care who gets the credit as long as we win! Harmon Killebrew of the Minnesota Twins is routinely asked at least 50 times a year by newspapermen and radio and television interviewers "How many home runs are you going to hit this year?" Killebrew has been drilled in the proper answer by managers and coaches who stress teamwork, so that his answer is completely predictable He will say that he does not care how many home runs he hits so long as his team wins A winning team cannot be built on any other basis

The supervisor who is thinking in terms of managing a group should indicate in his verbal and nonverbal communication that he is committed to the team principle Do not worry about credit but do worry about the team reaching its goals If the supervisor does seem unduly interested in taking credit for his contribution to the group's success, other members will soon follow suit, and the star system with every man for himself may result

The supervisor who is worried about credit may suggest to his men that they are working for him and his glorification He can provide them with some rewards, particularly monetary rewards, but ultimately he can never give them the satisfactions that they can derive from teamwork They will never work as hard for him as they will for the good of all

4 *Recognize good work* The supervisor can encourage his group to fulfill the social approval and esteem needs of the members. When a man pays another a compliment for a job well done, the supervisor can tell the man who paid the compliment that it was a good thing to do A manager should be watching for positive reinforcement furnished by the members of the group for one another He should note compliments, offers to help with work, social recognition of other members, and similar indications that members are considerate and appreciative of new employees as well as of one another The alert supervisor will encourage such moves by adding his own compliment, offers of help, recognition through social invitation, or by praising the man who by his behavior furthers group solidarity and by pointing out to him that his actions are of great *importance to the group*

If the supervisor is not on guard, he will be excessively preoccupied with the high status members of his group These are "good" men, who are responsible and can be counted on to always do a good job If he attends to the low status members, those who are marginal in their routine work, it is usually to criticize or worry about how to improve them He should spend more time fulfilling social and esteem

needs of low status people than he does those of the high status members A little time devoted to showing the marginal man, the potential "deadwood," that the supervisor thinks of him as doing a vital job (even though routine) and that he recognizes and respects him as a person, will go a long way toward increasing his output The man who sweeps the floor can take pride in his job, but he is not likely to if no one recognizes and appreciates the work The file clerk may be paid to keep files neat and orderly, but only part of the satisfaction potential of the job is realized if no one notices

5 *Set clear attainable group goals* Group cohesiveness is increased if everyone knows that the group has a goal, if they clearly understand what the goal is, and if they believe that it can be attained The supervisor often breaks the production quota for his division into short-term production goals without making it clear to every person that the individual quota is but part of the larger group goal Attaining a group objective further emphasizes the team nature of the task One of the most powerful factors building teamwork in athletics is the fact that *teams* win or lose A track coach has more difficulty building cohesiveness than a baseball coach has because even though the track team competes with other track teams a high jumper may win even when his team loses The fact that the entire group wins or loses increases the group's cohesiveness

Many groups in organizations do not clearly win or lose as do competing athletic teams, but much the same effect results from the group's having a clear goal Reaching the objective is an indication of success, and success gives the group prestige and satisfies the esteem needs of its members

The group may need long-term plans but the supervisor must also provide clear short-term goals For most groups a goal that is several months away loses its attractiveness A goal that may be reached within a week or two seems much more attainable And groups only work for goals they think they can reach

Of course, the goal to be attained must be clearly specified and understood A vague statement of objectives is seldom useful For example, a good job is the goal of every division of the organization But how can members of a unit know when they have done a good job? On the other hand, if the goal is to change over to the production of the new part by June 10 and to be in full production by June 12, the unit has a clear objective against which to measure success If the supervisor can report that the changeover is making excellent progress, and if everyone works together, the group may be able *to beat* the deadline,

then he is exerting a positive pressure on the group that will increase its cohesiveness

6 *Give group rewards* Reaching a goal is rewarding, but the supervisor can emphasize the identity of the group, help build tradition, and stress teamwork by giving the entire group a reward for reaching an objective Too often organizations gear their incentive system to the old view of managing individuals Thus, individual incentives are stressed over group incentives

Competition within the group is encouraged by giving individuals salary increases and bonuses Rewarding individuals for outstanding work is certainly an important way to increase organizational success However, this practice encourages the "star" system and destroys team spirit One must remember that organizations are largely dependent on people working together

The wise supervisor will continue to use individual incentives to encourage productivity but he will also give group incentives These may take the form of across-the-board salary increases when some noteworthy achievement has been made by his division, or they may be bonuses for every member when an important goal is reached There may be other rewards aimed at the need for esteem and the recognition of workmanship such as letters of commendation for the group, plaques, dinners, or other social affairs in recognition for a job done well

Should the supervisor receive personal recognition from the organization, such as a special award or letter of commendation, he is well advised to call a meeting of his group and reflect the recognition back on them The old "I could not have done it without each and every one of you" speech may sound corny but it is given so often because it succeeds in building cohesiveness

7 *Keep psychologically close to the group members* The supervisor who wants to build his unit into a highly cohesive team must associate with his men so that he can understand their point of view If he does this, he can anticipate their reaction to new proposals and can interpret their position to his superiors If he does not keep psychologically close to his men, he may find himself fighting them Inevitably there will be times when the directives of higher management will come in conflict or seem to come in conflict with the group's goals When this happens the supervisor must decide whether to fight for his men and try to change the directive of higher management or whether he must change the group's goals to bring them in line with the directive In short, will he be for the men or the company? The first-line super-

visor is the man who faces this knotty problem most often. Certainly, it has no easy solution.

The best way to stay psychologically close to the group is *to be part of it*. If the supervisor has a role within the group, he is in an excellent position to understand the group's attitude and response to the demands of the organization. If the supervisor's role within the group is that of the natural leader, the cohesiveness of the group will be increased. The supervisor then is leader in fact as well as in name, his opinion carries great weight and his directives tend to be followed.

Some organizations go to great length to assure that the leaders are not part of the group. The military tries to separate the officers from the noncommissioned officers and the enlisted men. They wear different uniforms, live in different barracks, have different social clubs. A good deal of the malingering or "goldbricking" in the military stems from this approach. The officers seldom understand their men, and the psychological distance that this creates results in resentment and inefficiency. Occasionally an officer will break through the rigid caste lines established by the organization and become the natural leader of a group. He is then widely loved by his men and respected. He is asserted to be "for the men" and a "good Joe" as well as a good officer.

The highly cohesive groups that do develop in the military are often led by men with no formal position, and they fight the organization rather than work for it. In the Air Force, where the informal group became of utmost importance as in bomber crews during the Second World War, the caste lines were systematically destroyed by the officers. The "flyboys" wore their hats crushed and were generally informal and derogatory toward the "spit and polish" of the old West Point tradition.

To be sure there are some advantages to having the officers keep a psychological distance in the army. They may be called upon to order men to be killed. The high death rate of second lieutenants in the Second World War was partially due to the fact that in combat these officers did become part of the group, they simply could not order other members of the group to do what they did not themselves do. There is some further truth in the old adage that familiarity breeds contempt, and keeping the supervisors socially and psychologically separate may add an aura to them that makes for easier acceptance of orders. The highly authoritarian organization may need to keep its managerial class clearly separate from its workers. Even so, the supervisor in such an organization must keep psychologically close to the members of his group if he is to create a cohesive team.

8. *Treat group members like people.* At the risk of being mis-

understood we will assert that the greatest cause of wasted time and inefficiency in the modern organization is the feeling on the part of many individuals that they are cogs in a large, inhuman machine and that nobody recognizes them as individual human beings who amount to something.

Increasingly, important organizations are managed by people with scientific training. Engineers often become managers. Other technicians with scientific backgrounds move from technical jobs to managerial positions which require that they work with groups of people. Scientific training puts a premium on precision, predictability, and control. Machines and electronic equipment do as they are told. Of course, there are always troublesome technical problems. The authors, although not experts on technical matters, have long subscribed to the old law that if anything can go wrong with a machine, it will. Even so, a cog in a machine will act like a cog in a machine. People are not machines. They do not act like machines and they resent being treated like machines.

If the manager has been trained as a technician and has developed work habits conditioned by the predictability of the laws of mechanics or chemistry, he may apply these same work habits to direction of human beings. When he does, the situation often explodes. He may respond by charging that the people in his group are not reasonable. What he means is that they do not act in the predictable fashion of machines. In preceding chapters we have repeatedly stressed the difficulty of predicting human response. To put it another way: People are not as predictable as computers. If they were, engineers would surpass even the best of the organization's most efficient communicators.

The supervisor can build teamwork by going out of his way to treat the members of his work group as human beings. Find out about their hopes, fears, and aspirations. What are their hobbies? What about their families? A good public speaker always makes it a point to find out something specific about his audience, something important to this particular audience that is important to no other. When he comments on this special information, his listeners are flattered because they know that he cared enough to find out something with special and personal significance to them. A good supervisor can use the same basic principle and achieve the same gratifying response when he finds out about the individual interests of the members of his group.

To sum up, the cohesive group fulfills the need for each of its members to feel that what he is doing for the organization amounts to something and that he is not just putting in his time and drawing his paycheck. It makes him feel that he is part of a team that knows and respects him as an individual.

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Improving Communication in Organizational Meetings

COMMUNICATING THROUGH MEETINGS

CHAPTER 7

Survey after survey indicates that managers tend to have two dominant attitudes toward the organizational conference First, the organization has *too many meetings* Second, *too much time is wasted* during the course of these sessions

The negative attitudes are predominant despite the fact that meetings are essential to effective communication within the organization No organization can survive without them The meeting provides an opportunity to inform other members directly about important matters in a situation where they can *ask questions and make comments* No form of written communication can make this claim The meeting is an excellent device to build cohesiveness, it identifies the group and gives the members a chance to develop a tradition

Meetings also give the participants an opportunity to interact and develop roles—to get to know one another They can share their experiences, problems, and successes The meeting can provide a channel for upward communication Skillfully conducted meetings can brief upper echelons on the information and attitudes of the rank and file

Abuses of Organizational Meetings

Clearly, the organizational conference is suited to serve a number of important purposes Yet, members of organizations repeatedly testify to the abuse of meetings The paradox is explained by the fact that too many meetings are badly organized, badly conducted, and totally useless Meetings in which little communication takes place are time-wasters The manager need only attend a few such meetings a month to decide that his organization holds too many meetings

It is even more ironic that often the time-wasting meeting results from the desire to save time The conference leader bustles in with everything planned and opens the meeting with an apology for having called it He assures the group that the meeting will halt promptly at the end of the hour He knows that a number of people have other appointments, and he too has to attend another meeting shortly His entire manner communicates haste He glances at his watch from time to time When a discussion develops he cuts it off with a reminder that a number of things have to be covered, and time is short The member who raises a question or makes a comment in such a meeting is a brave man Soon it becomes apparent that speed is more important than getting work done The leader goes through the motion of mentioning the items on the agenda, asking for questions or comments, but no real communication takes place Feedback is stifled by the drive to cover the agenda in the specified time The meeting is useless, it could have been eliminated, it is a real time-waster

Some organizations continue to hold regularly scheduled meetings although they are no longer necessary Originally the meetings met a need, but as time passed the circumstances changed and the meeting lost its purpose However, because the members are in the habit of holding the meeting, they continue to do so Such meetings are also time-wasters

Meetings may be used as administrative dodges in the political infighting that occurs in most organizations The inter-group conflict stemming from empire building or buck-passing may spawn such abuses One way for a cagy administrator to handle a touchy issue that he does not want to deal with personally is to "bury it" in committee In some organizations the *ad hoc* committees seldom serve any purpose other than to postpone action or to kill a proposal

The administrator may use the meeting to conceal his decision That is, he has already made up his mind but he pretends that the meeting has been called to discuss the problem and arrive at a solution After a time the people in his organization catch on to what he is doing

and come to realize that the meeting is a sham and that the "old man" has already made up his mind and that nothing said in the meeting will change it

When the men who call a meeting have a genuine need to communicate they should organize and plan in such a way that they have enough time to do the job They must assure a climate conducive to feedback if the session is to be successful Such a meeting will run overtime and may not cover the entire agenda, but members will say that it was a good meeting, that it accomplished something, and that "we ought to have *more* meetings like this one" Such meetings are not time-wasters

Proper Uses of Meetings

THE MEETING AS A RITUAL

Chapter 6 stressed the importance of tradition and ritual to cohesiveness Every organization has some meetings that are used primarily as rituals The department heads may always present their yearly budgets in a meeting attended by all the vice-presidents Each man may have only five minutes to discuss a complicated budget A brief question and answer period may follow the presentation Auditors, accountants, the vice-president in charge of the department, as well as the president have carefully screened the budgets before the presentation The meeting puts a rubber stamp on the decisions already made Still, the organization goes through the yearly ritual of presenting the budgets. Some "Young Turk" may challenge the usefulness of the meeting He asserts that nothing is accomplished The meeting is a waste of time He is voted down and the organization continues to use the meeting as a ritual He misjudged the meeting because he did not understand its purpose

In addition to adding to the cohesiveness of the organization, the ritualistic meeting often assures that hurt feelings do not impede efficiency Chapter 5 stressed the principle that a man in a position of authority must be treated as though he had that authority When important matters are discussed, a man holding a position of authority will need to be informed He may not be particularly interested in the subject and he may not take an active part in the meeting but the very fact that he was invited to attend communicates to him that the people calling the meeting recognize his importance within the organization

If the proponents of policy or proposals fail to have a ritualistic meeting in which all people of authority are informed about developments, they may suddenly find many roadblocks in their way The man of authority who feels slighted in this regard can throw his weight

around. A much wiser course is to call a meeting designed primarily to keep the interdepartmental fences mended. The only requirements for such a meeting are that the proper forms are recognized and it is conducted in the expected way. The man who claims this meeting accomplishes nothing and therefore is a waste of time is judging the ritualistic meeting on the wrong grounds.

THE BRIEFING MEETING

A conference that often looks like a ritualistic meeting but really is quite different is the briefing session. The purpose of this meeting is to provide members of the organization with the information they need to carry out a program. The general objective is clear. The basic decisions have been made and the plans to accomplish this objective are drawn up. Now the people responsible for doing the job must be told what their task is to be and how they are to do it. The meeting is crucial to the task efficiency of the organization and must be carefully planned and conducted.

THE INSTRUCTIONAL MEETING

Organizations often use meetings to develop their members, to make them more proficient on their jobs, or to provide them with information that will enable them to work with greater understanding. As in the briefing meeting, the instructional session is built around the individuals who have the knowledge and must impart or teach that knowledge to the other members of the group.

THE CREATIVE MEETING

On occasion a meeting is set up to "brainstorm" new ideas, techniques, or procedures. The purpose of the creative meeting is to stimulate members of the organization to think up new approaches and solutions. On occasion new ideas are developed during the course of the meeting. Frequently, however, the meeting serves as a stimulus to the creativity of the members and helps them to develop new ideas prior to or after the actual brainstorming session.

THE DECISION-MAKING MEETING

The most difficult and yet one of the most useful meetings is the session designed to make plans and decisions. Such meetings have both the responsibility and authority to solve important problems facing the organizations.

CONSULTATION MEETINGS

The consultation resembles a decision-making meeting but does not have the authority or responsibility for the decision. The man responsible for the decision does not delegate these powers to the group. Rather he asks for their advice and suggestions before he makes up his mind and personally comes to a decision.

Six Basic Rules for Planning the Meeting

1. *Do not have a meeting unless it is absolutely necessary.* Meetings are the heavy artillery of organizational communication. The wise general uses his big guns sparingly because they are expensive and difficult to maneuver. On the other hand, he really has no satisfactory substitute for them and so he must use them on occasion. If the communication can be accomplished through individual conferences or by other techniques, the meeting is probably unnecessary.

2. *When a meeting is absolutely necessary make sure that it accomplishes its objective.* The members of the organization must treat the meeting as an important occasion if it is to do the job. They must prepare for the meeting carefully. They must also allow sufficient time. They must create a group climate that encourages maximum feedback.

3. *Determine the purpose of the meeting.* If the purpose of the meeting is ritualistic, then it should be treated and judged as such. If the meeting is a briefing session or an instructional conference, it should be organized and planned to achieve these ends. If the meeting is to be creative, then it must be conducted in such a way that a strong climate of freewheeling permissiveness is developed. If the meeting is consultative, this should be made very clear to the members. Nothing is harder on the effectiveness of such a meeting than to have the members think it is to be a decision-making session and then discover that the decision will be made later. Always make absolutely certain that all the members understand the purpose of the meeting. If they come to the session hoping to accomplish other purposes, they often become disillusioned with the meeting and after a time with all organizational meetings.

4. *Plan the meeting to achieve the purpose.* What is the best place to hold the meeting? If it is a ritualistic meeting, perhaps the most impressive conference room in the organization should be used. The board room might be an appropriate place for this meeting. Select a classroom with audiovisual aids and desks and blackboards for the instructional

conference Do not hold a decision-making meeting in the office of a high status member The plush board room may inhibit the kind of communication required for a decision-making session Choose a small simple meeting room with few distractions where the members can sit close together

Which type of meeting format will best achieve the purpose of the group? A series of short presentations with little interruption is sufficient to achieve ritualistic ends Once the proper salute to authority has been made, the members appreciate short speeches and a quick conclusion to the ritualistic meeting For a briefing session or an instructional meeting a lecture using the latest presentational techniques including overhead projectors, filmstrips, flannel boards, flip charts, graphs, blackboards, charts, and other visual aids may be the best procedure Even so, there must be provision for feedback from the members attending the meeting Perhaps a series of short presentations with plenty of time for questions and discussions is the way to organize some of these meetings For the creative meeting the less formal the structure the better Status differences must not be stressed Informality should be the keynote, the atmosphere of the meeting must be social, relaxed, and agreeable For the consultative meeting and the decision-making session an agenda is often useful but set speeches should be discouraged Everyone should have an equal opportunity to take part.

Who should attend the meeting? This is a crucial question for the ritualistic session The purpose of such a meeting is to ensure that people in authority, who expect to be consulted and informed, will feel that their position is recognized Therefore the selection of participants must proceed with this in mind Who would feel left out and hurt? Who could jeopardize the project if he was not informed? In the briefing session often the only people who need to attend are the members who will implement the plan For instructional conferences the question is simple Who needs the information or skill that will be taught in the meeting? For creative conferences talent as well as understanding and authority should be considered Sometimes, if a person *not concerned* with the organization takes part in the meeting, he will contribute some fresh ideas Planners of decision-making and consultative meetings should include those members who have the necessary information and the proper status

Who should be the leader? For a ritualistic meeting the leader should have high status if possible The president of the organization, for example, is a good person to preside over an important ritualistic meeting For briefing sessions and instructional conferences leadership often can be furnished by the person doing the briefing or by the teacher of the class For the creative meeting status should be discounted Therefore, the leadership of the meeting should be unobtrusive, preferably by someone

with the same status as most of the other members A meeting of peers is more likely to be free and easy The decision-making and consultative meetings require more direction Again the meeting should be planned so that status differences do not inhibit honest discussion of important questions If men of differing status must take part, every effort should be made to reduce the differences in the choice of meeting place, in the formality of the meeting, and in *the manner and attitude of high status members*

In the absence of a role structure the members of a meeting will turn to the man with the highest status for leadership If he is also the leader of the meeting it may turn out to be a lecture rather than a discussion Sometimes, a moderator who is a peer of most of the members of the meeting can keep the natural tendency to rely on the high status member from destroying the efficiency of the meeting He cannot do so, however, without the willing cooperation of the high status members

5 *Do your home work* A successful meeting requires time and effort in the planning stages A certain amount of administrative detail must be taken care of if the meeting is to run smoothly Attention to small details such as pads and pencils for the participants, coffee at break time, chalk for the instructors, or a well-lighted, well-ventilated, and well-heated room all contribute to the success of the meeting When such details are carefully handled, the members get the impression that this meeting is important and will accomplish something worthwhile When they are not attended to, the members get a negative impression of the meeting

The authors have participated in innumerable instructional sessions Often these meetings get off to a bad start because some small detail was not handled properly Perhaps the door to the meeting room was locked and a janitor had to be found before the meeting could get underway On occasion the room's temperature had been uncomfortable Frequently the planners forgot to check on possible distractions, and the meeting was interrupted by the whine of a floor-buffing machine or the sound of a jackhammer on the floor below If the tape recorder does not work or the light in an overhead projector is burned out, the interruption and distraction can reduce the effectiveness of the meeting

More importantly, the planner should specify in concrete terms the outcome of the meeting The outcome should be distinguished from the purpose If a decision is to be reached, how is this decision to be developed? In general outline? In specific detail? When is this final decision to be reached?

Do the participants require briefing before the meeting? How will this be done? Will they be furnished with information ahead of time?

Will they receive instructions as to how to prepare for the meeting? How will this be accomplished? Too many meetings are held off the top of the head If a meeting is required, particularly a decision-making or consultative meeting, then all participants should be knowledgeable and have thought through to some extent their ideas on the topic under discussion

How will the proceedings and results be recorded? Will a secretary be appointed from among the members of the meeting? Will a professional secretary keep a record in shorthand? Would it be better to keep a tape recording of the entire meeting and have it transcribed by a secretary later? Who will prepare the agenda? Will everyone get a copy prior to the meeting? Would it be better to have the group formulate its own agenda?

6 *Utilize the results of the meeting* Some time should be spent after the meeting to evaluate its effectiveness in a systematic way Of course the members usually make an informal evaluation of the meeting as they walk away from it They may think or say to their friends that it was a good meeting or that they talked all around the subject or that they wasted a lot of time and nothing was accomplished The organization will benefit from more organized and systematic evaluation of the meetings Some member of the group should collect impressions of the strengths and weaknesses of the meeting These evaluations should be fed back to the participants to upgrade future meetings

One of the striking things about meetings is that they seldom spend any time talking about the group and how it functions Members generally concentrate on the job and seldom mention such important matters as those discussed in Chapters 4 to 6 When groups do spend short periods after a meeting talking about it, the cohesiveness and effectiveness of the group is often increased

Formal techniques for evaluation of meetings usually save time in the long run The results of the meeting should be utilized to their fullest What can be done to "follow up" and apply the results of the conference? Do not let the matter drop at the end of the meeting

Summary of Advice for Preparing the Meeting

The members planning a meeting should use the following checklist of questions to guide them

1 What is the purpose of the meeting? Ritual? Briefing? Instruction? Creative development? Decision forming? Consultation?
2 What outcomes are to emerge from the meeting? When should these goals be reached?

3 What type of conference will best achieve the meeting's purpose? Lecture and discussion? Short presentations by several people, followed by a discussion period? Round table discussion? Other?
4 Who will participate? Have we left out someone who should be invited? Have we included someone who need not be involved?
5 Who will serve as leader?
6 What is the best place to hold the meeting? What is a good time? How long should the meeting last?
7 How and when will the participants be briefed on the meeting and given directions for preparing to take part?
8 What physical details need to be taken care of? Will the room be ready and open? Ventilation and heating? Audiovisual aids? Can we guard against unnecessary distractions?
9 How will the proceedings and results be recorded?
10 Who will prepare the agenda? Will it be circulated in advance?
11 How will the conference be evaluated?
12 What will be done to "follow up" and apply the results of the meeting?

IMPROVING THE CONFERENCE

Understanding Role and Status

Formal positions with their authority and prestige affect the operation of a business meeting In the absence of an informal role structure for the members of the meeting they will tend to rely on the formal status of the organization to structure these roles They will turn to the man holding the highest status position for cues as to how they are to proceed

If the members of the meeting are familiar enough with one another to know their roles within the work groups of the organization, these roles will affect the structure of the meeting Even so, the composition of a given meeting may be somewhat unique Some members may come from the same work group and all of the members may know one another, but this group of people may not have worked together before they have been invited to the meeting Under these conditions the group will experience some preliminary role struggles

The member who knows and understands the basic process by which roles emerge in the leaderless discussion group will be able to help a meeting over these rough spots The group will develop a certain amount of cohesiveness even in a short meeting though it will be much weaker than the team spirit that can develop in a long-term work group

Cohesiveness should be encouraged for it will assure greater success The organizational conference will benefit by a careful application of the principles discussed in Chapters 4 to 6

Building a Positive Social Climate

When the members of an organization gather to have a meeting they begin to interact socially They nod or talk to one another They smile and frown and laugh All of these interactions contribute to the building of a social climate that is pleasant, congenial, and relaxing, on the one hand, or to an atmosphere that is cold, forbidding, and tense, on the other A positive social climate encourages participation

Professor R F Bales and his associates at Harvard University have discovered three social interactions that build this positive social climate and three that contribute to a negative atmosphere

SHOWS OF SOLIDARITY

The first positive contribution to the group is a *show of group solidarity* Among speech-communications that show solidarity is any action or statement that indicates to the other members that this meeting is important and that the group has an opportunity to do something significant It can raise another member's status, it can offer to help him, and it can suggest ways to help the group as such In general, if the members indicate by their manner and words that they are interested and eager to make the meeting a success, they will build the social climate

TENSION RELEASE

The second positive contribution is a *show of tension release* Tension is largely released through indications of pleasure such as smiles, chuckles, and laughs If the group can spend a little time before getting down to business just joking and socializing it should do so One manager said, "Don't you feel guilty socializing and wasting valuable time for the company?" The answer is that, judiciously used, a bit of socializing is not time wasted but time well spent.

AGREEMENT

The third positive interaction that helps to build a warm, pleasant group atmosphere is *agreement* The more the participants in a meeting agree with one another, the more enjoyable they find the meeting, the less threatening it is to them personally, and the happier they are to take

part in it Agreements are particularly rewarding A great many experiments in psychology have demonstrated that human behavior can be changed by selectively rewarding certain actions or words with a nod or verbal expression of agreement

NEGATIVE FACTORS

The three negative behaviors are (1) being *antagonistic* to a person or to the meeting, (2) *showing tensions,* and (3) *disagreeing* Little need be said about the effect of antagonistic behavior on the group climate When members grow antagonistic the social climate becomes uncomfortable

SOCIAL TENSIONS

Tension may manifest itself in several ways One of these is by being quiet and giving the impression of being bored and uninterested But no member is truly bored and indifferent when given an opportunity to speak up and be recognized as a person of ability and competence However, he risks a great deal by plunging into the meeting and participating actively The other participants may be irritated by his actions He may appear uninformed or unintelligent This gamble causes him to feel nervous and tense and he may take flight from the situation by pretending he is not interested in the meeting Prior to it he states that he hopes it will not last too long because he has important things to attend to back at his desk He seems restless and eager to leave Everyone feels some of this tension at the start of any meeting

At first the atmosphere is tense and cold It has to be warmed up Initially, people speak very softly, sigh a good bit, and are overly polite If this tension is not released, the whole tenor of the session may be affected This preliminary tension must be eliminated before the meeting can really get down to business

Once the group does start to work, more social tensions are generated by role struggles and disagreements over ideas and suggestions When these tensions reach a certain level they too must be released or the meeting will break down A good participant is alert to these tensions and will attempt to release them himself or encourage another member who tries to do so Of course, too much joking and socializing can interfere with the efficiency of the meeting But after these tensions have been released, the group should get on with business

DISAGREEMENTS

Disagreements are socially punishing but absolutely essential to sound thinking They are double-edged When there is a high level of

disagreement in the meeting, people grow more cautious and tense It is difficult to keep the personal element out of disagreements, and the man who finds his ideas subjected to challenge feels, as one member of such a meeting put it, "shot down" At the same time, the ideas presented in a meeting need to be questioned and tested If they are unsound, they must be rejected Thus, disagreements pose a social problem to members of a meeting

One form of the creative meeting is the "brainstorming" session Brainstorming rules out completely all the negative social interactions, particularly disagreements This type of session stresses quantity of ideas rather than their quality The more ideas the better Freewheeling is encouraged Wild ideas are reinforced and accepted "Hitchhiking" is also valuable in such a meeting Members reward the picking up and modifying of ideas that are improved upon A record is kept of all of the ideas, and the members judge their success by the number of ideas they discover The social climate developed during brainstorming sessions is permissive, characteristically there is much laughter and chuckling in evidence The brainstorming session graphically demonstrates the power of positive social interactions in building a meeting where every man can relax and say what he thinks

Before the lists of ideas that come out of a brainstorming session can be used they must be culled and the poor ones eliminated This task can be assigned to a second group The atmosphere of the critical group will be much less permissive and the existing tensions much greater Every other form of meeting includes both creative phases and critical phases Both agreements and disagreements are required for such meetings

The successful groups studied at the University of Minnesota worked out ways to encourage and tolerate disagreement *None of them managed to keep the disagreements from straining the social fabric of the meeting* One of the reasons that the rate of disagreement increases with the cohesiveness is that groups must be cohesive before they can afford to tolerate disagreements Among all the groups studied by Professor Bales at Harvard the highest rate of disagreement was observed in teams of husbands and wives working on a problem The family unit is the most highly cohesive in our society and can afford more disagreements than most any other type of group

Some participants try to cushion the hurt by prefacing the disagreement with an agreement or a compliment They say, "That's a good idea, Joe I really think you have something there, but " Or they say, "That's right I agree with you, Joe There is an awful lot in what you say, BUT " This may be perceived as an agreement for a time and therefore does not hurt the person. Eventually in speech-communication,

however, the other members of the meeting discover that these opening compliments are just preparing the way for the knife They begin to cringe as the "BUT I do think we ought to look at the other side of it " hits them *A disagreement to do its job must be perceived as a disagreement* After all, disagreements are the sieves that strain out undesirable ideas and they will not work unless they are understood to signify, "Stop! This will not do" When they are properly understood, however, no amount of preliminary agreement or complimenting will serve to sugarcoat them In meetings where the standard procedure is to disagree very bluntly and in crude language a strongly worded "You meathead! Whatcha got for brains? That'll never work," may be no harder on the person who receives it than a more tactful disagreement in a meeting where the members traditionally use the "I agree with you, BUT " form of disagreement Of course, if the form of disagreements and the meetings were switched the results would be exciting

What should the members of a meeting do about disagreements? They must develop ways to encourage and tolerate them First, they should develop enough cohesiveness so that disagreements are offered Second, they must develop ways to knit the group back together after a period of heavy disagreement Quite often the number of disagreements as well as the amount of tension increases as the group moves to a decision Good groups indulge in considerable positive interaction *after the decision* They joke and laugh They show solidarity toward the group "It was a good meeting," they say "It accomplished something Let us all get behind this decision and make it work" They tell the members whose position was rejected that they had a good point, but now that the decision is made the organization needs their wholehearted support The group cannot succeed without their help Such apparent aimless socializing after the decision is vital to the health of the organization and must be encouraged if disagreements are to continue in future meetings

Some successful groups concentrate the disagreements into one role One member does most of the disagreeing and the group expects him to do so Whenever they feel the need for disagreements they turn to him They reward him by giving him a nickname or by joshing him about his penchant for disagreeing If a new man attends the meeting and asks afterward about this member "who seems pretty disagreeable," the other members say, "Don't mind good old Joe He's just that way He doesn't mean any harm by it He's really a good guy" Since Joe plays this role, when a member finds his ideas under attack he is less hurt than he would be if some other member disagreed with him After all, Joe disagrees with everything and does not mean any harm

TAKING PART IN MEETINGS

Participating in Meetings

BALANCED PARTICIPATION

A good participant functions in the meeting to the best of his ability and uses fully the information he possesses. He does not sit silent. He does not allow his feeling of tension to make him appear restless, bored, or uninterested. If he is silent or seems to be bored and uninterested, he unintentionally communicates to the others that he does not think the meeting is important. Several participants acting in this way will depress the meeting and set a tone that will make it ineffective. A silent member is a threat and a preoccupation for the others. They have no way of knowing whether he is approving or disapproving. They are worried that he may not do his share. Even if the participant does not have a great deal to contribute, he should nevertheless react to what is being said. He should appear interested. Whenever something is said with which he agrees, he should by voice or gesture indicate this and thus show his involvement in the meeting.

Early in the session, when social tensions are high and not much work is being done, the good participant makes an effort to show solidarity to the group, to show tension release, and to agree. These interactions are vitally important to creating the proper climate at the beginning. Several silent, bored, and restless participants can set the wrong style for the meeting; conversely, enthusiastic members can create a climate that will involve the others.

Just as there is a danger in not participating, there is another problem: namely, that of participating too much. The knowledgeable member should not monopolize the meeting, if for no other reason than the need for feedback from the less informed members. In addition, other participants are often irritated by a member who seems to talk too much.

SPEAKING TO THE POINT

One of the participant's most difficult tasks is to keep his comments directed to the point. In group discussions there is usually a tendency to digress from the topic, but a good participant makes sure that he does not turn away from the main subject. If the relationship of what he is going to say to the topic is not immediately clear, he should briefly preface his remarks explaining how his idea relates to the point. He does

not say a few words to the point and then introduce a new idea that goes off in another direction Too often a person gets the floor and makes a statement on the topic, but because he has the floor he decides to say a few more words on something only vaguely related to the general topic Such digressions irritate the other members of the group If several participants do this, the meeting may get quite far afield

A good way to assure balanced participation and speaking to the point is to make each contribution short A good rule is "one idea per contribution"

Leading the Meeting

CHARACTERISTICS OF A GOOD LEADER

A leader needs to bring to his job a commitment to the meeting and the desire to conduct a productive session He needs to have the time and energy to devote to the task He should enjoy participating in a discussion and be a good speaker He should know the dynamics of groups as outlined in Chapters 4 to 6 He should know how even temporary groups begin to form cohesiveness and structure In addition he needs to develop some specialized skills that are required to lead a meeting These skills include planning an agenda, creating a climate that assures widespread participation, controlling the talk so it is orderly and all participants are given a chance to be heard, and steering the group along the path by the agenda He should be able to make spur-of-the-moment adjustments and allow some detours if they seem useful, he must be careful, however, not to let the meeting drift too far off course

DUTIES OF THE LEADER

The leader should introduce any members who do not know one another He draws out the silent participants He keeps one or two members from monopolizing the meeting He watches the time and the agenda and keeps the meeting on track and on time He often must relieve tensions at the beginning He must handle comments and questions in such a way that people are encouraged to make more contributions

TECHNIQUES FOR LEADING THE MEETING

The leader has three basic techniques to use in managing the meeting These are the question, the summary, and the directive

The first problem facing the leader is to get the meeting started

Questions are useful to get a discussion underway Open-ended questions are phrased in such a way that they cannot be answered with a "yes" or a "no" They usually ask for information, an opinion, or a suggestion The leader can often use such a question early He should quickly establish that the comments are to be short and to the point If the first speaker runs on, the leader can ask a direct question of another member

Perhaps the most frequent problem for the leader of the meeting is the tendency of groups to drift off the topic Sometimes such discussion leads to important matters that appear on the agenda elsewhere and they can be taken up out of order without harm The skillful leader recognizes when this happens and lets the meeting have its head Frequently the digressions are time-wasting and he must bring the meeting back on the topic Questions can be used to do this He may ask "Can we tie this in with the point about the quality control standards?" "Just a moment, how does this relate to the problem of slow deliveries?" "Let's see now I'm a bit confused Where are we now in relation to overtime?"

Summaries can also be used to give the meeting an overview of the last few minutes of discussion, and if the leader emphasizes the topic on the agenda he can tactfully suggest that the group is off the topic He may also use the summary as a way to move to another item on the agenda if he feels the meeting is drifting because enough has been said on a topic

Finally, the leader may simply assert that the group is off the subject and direct that they get back on the track He may say "We seem to be getting off the subject Let's get back to Bill's point" "This is interesting, but it really doesn't help much in regard to the question of who is responsible" "I've been listening to the last few minutes here and wondering how it ties in We have to get back to the basic question that Joe asked earlier"

The leader is expected to move the meeting along He should watch for signs that a given item has been discussed enough Quite often a loss of interest or drifting from the subject is a clue that the time has come to stop talking about a topic The summary is the most useful technique to keep the meeting in progress The leader can round off the consideration of an agenda item and lead naturally to the next topic by giving a summary He may also use questions and ask whether enough time has been devoted to the topic and whether the group would like to move on to the next item

From time to time during the course of the meeting the group may need to make decisions The leader can help the members if he steps in at these points and indicates that there seems to be a consensus as to what should be done or if he asks for an indication of consensus Questions are helpful at this point He may ask "Are we in substantial agree-

ment on this point?" "Can we all agree that this revised production schedule is the one we want?"

He can also help the majority reach a decision by suggesting a vote In a small meeting this vote can be taken very informally by an expression of agreement or disagreement or simply by nodding and shaking heads In larger meetings the leader should clearly state the issue and then ask for the affirmative and negative votes He may take a voice vote or ask for a show of hands or a standing vote Some organizations have provisions for secret ballots or for roll-call votes on extremely important issues The leader must always announce to the meeting the results of the vote

HANDLING DIFFICULT SITUATIONS

One of the most common and awkward problems for the leader of the meeting is the member who talks too much If the leader is too brusque in cutting him off, he may embarrass the other participants and sound antagonistic

Sometimes the leader can ask a yes-no type question of the talkative member and then quickly direct an open-ended question to another participant For example

Leader (*breaking in*) Just a minute, Joe, would you be willing to drop that account completely?

Joe Now, I didn't say

Leader I just want to be clear on this Would you be in favor of that?

Joe Well, no, but

Leader (*interrupting*) Bill, I wonder how you feel about this matter?

Sometimes the person who is dominating the meeting is speaking at an abstract level, he can then be stopped by a question asking for specific information or for an example The following dialogue is illustrative

Joe There are altogether too many people around here who are not pulling their weight We just have too much deadwood Too many of our men are just putting in their time

Leader (*interrupting*) Excuse me, Joe, but could you give us an example of what you mean?

Summaries can be used to stop long-winded contributions Recapitulations are expected of the leader, and if he breaks in to summarize, the dominant member will often sit back and give him the floor

If the leader concludes his summary by directing a question to another member, he can tactfully cut off the talkative participant

Sometimes the leader will simply have to direct the member to stop talking He might say "That's an important point Let's get the reaction of some of the rest of us on that" "Just a minute you have raised three or four points Before you go further I would like to spend a little more time on this question of responsibility What do the rest of you think about that?" "I'm going to ask you to stop there for a minute and hold your next comment All of the group has not yet had a chance to be heard on this point Let's hear from them and then we will come back to you"

A less spectacular but equally difficult situation is furnished by the member who does not talk up The leader will have to use questions to deal with this person He should address him by name and ask a direct question The best form of question is the open-ended one, because if he asks a question that can be answered with a *yes* or a *no,* he is likely to receive a one-word answer When the leader is first drawing out a participant he should be careful to ask questions that the man can answer He should not ask for specific information or examples unless he knows the member has the answer handy The wisest course is to ask for an opinion Questions such as the following can be used to draw out a quiet member

Bill, what do you think about this proposal?

Bill, where do you stand on the quality control matter?

Bill, we haven't heard from you about this yet What do you think?

If members of the meeting come in conflict, the leader must take the responsibility of handling the situation *He should not take sides* If he is questioned about his opinion, he can relay the question to the group "That is a tough one Can someone take a crack at it?" He may also reflect the question back to the questioner "Let me ask you how you would answer the same question?" If the leader answers questions about substantive measures, he is quite likely to be drawn into the conflict Once a part of the fight, he loses control of the meeting It is difficult to lead and take an active part The man who does both may monopolize the meeting

When several members come into conflict the leader should interrupt and focus the attention of the meeting on the group procedure rather than on the individuals involved. Remind the group of the areas of agreement Admit that intelligent people differ and that the group wants everyone to express his opinion Emphasize the importance of the ideas rather than the personalities involved in the conflict Remind them that differences about ideas are important to the successful functioning

of the group If the leader can insert a note of humor (not sarcasm or irony) to relieve tensions, he should do so

Summary Checklist for Evaluating the Meeting

1 Was the preparation for the meeting adequate? Equipment available? Necessary information furnished members? Rooms, visual aids, physical requirements met?
2 Was the purpose of the meeting clear to all the members? Were the objectives clearly specified? Did the leader introduce the agenda clearly and concisely?
3 Was permissive social climate established? Did all members participate?
4 Were feedback and disagreement encouraged?
5 Did the meeting stay on the topic? Did the leader exercise the right amount of control? Did the participants keep their contributions short and to the point?
6 Did the meeting accomplish anything? Did the leader help the group reach consensus?
7 How well did the leader handle difficult situations? The talkative member? The quiet member? Conflicts?
8 Were plans made to follow up and tie up the loose ends? In another meeting? In conferences?
9 What three things can be done to improve the next meeting?

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The Individual in the Organization

INDIVIDUAL ATTITUDES, AWARENESS, AND SKILLS FOR SUCCESSFUL COMMUNICATION

PART II

In Part I we viewed the problems of interpersonal communication from the broad perspective of the organization Given the restrictions of formal and informal social systems upon an individual's ability to produce and process messages, the next step in the study of interpersonal communication in the modern organization is to examine individual attitudes and skills and the person's sensitivity and awareness of the human dimension in a given communicative situation

Part II examines the problems of communication from the perspective of the individual It stresses a proper orientation to the communicative process as well as the principles of applied psychology pertaining to problems of misinformation, misunderstanding, and disagreement Part II includes detailed advice on listening and persuasion

Individual Attitudes and Insights Needed for Effective Communication

CHAPTER 8

Efficient message processing in an organization depends upon the communicative skills and attitudes of the individuals in the unit A good administrative structure facilitates the flow of messages just as cohesive work groups with stable role structures encourage the give-and-take required for high fidelity communication But in the long run no organization will reach its potential unless its personnel, most particularly its leaders, understand the factors that enter into the act of speech-communication and are able to control its numerous variables

This chapter deals with two essential ingredients for the person who would increase his ability to communicate within the organization The first is the speaker's self-awareness of his competence Self-awareness involves a clear and honest evaluation of one's current abilities and practices The second ingredient is a combination of knowledge and insight that enables a person to understand the characteristics of other factors that modify responses to messages Because of the way these elements of human psychology modify messages we term them transformers.

Levels of Communication Competence

In our work as consultants to various organizations we have observed people in communication and talked with them about their prob-

lems and experiences We have noted four levels of communication competence We now invite the reader to estimate his own competence using the following analysis as a guide

UNCONSCIOUS INCOMPETENCE

Some people daily meet many problems in communication without being aware of the choices open to them They do not recognize failure The person who is unconsciously incompetent is unaware that he is trying to reach an objective that is inappropriate and unrealistic in terms of the receiver's abilities, attitudes, and needs He is unaware that his messages are not sufficient to arouse understanding in the receiver He does not know that his failure to get the results he wants in working with others is due to his incompetence as a communicator He assumes the reason for his failure to be an inherent weakness in other people He is unaware that he cannot recall essential ideas and information after listening to a conversation or that his manner while listening disturbs those who communicate with him

Unconscious incompetence tends to be perpetuated in organizational communication Subordinates insulate their supervisors by denying them the feedback that would reveal their incompetence as communicators Whenever people say, "Remember the last time somebody told the boss he was wrong!" "Don't make waves," "Don't be a troublemaker," feedback is being suppressed Incidentally, some of the most troublesome communication problems in the modern organization are caused by the leader who has *unknowingly* left his subordinates with the impression he wants only "yes-men" on his staff

CONSCIOUS INCOMPETENCE

Other people *are* aware of their limitations in communication Awareness of incompetence may come as a result of a crisis that forces a person to assess his skills and abilities At the level of conscious incompetence the individual knows that his analysis of the needs, interests, and abilities of those with whom he works and to whom he talks is inadequate He senses his lack of skill in speaking and listening The person who admits deficiency typically protects himself by following one of three courses of action The first two are immature ways in that they reject the truth about oneself, and the third is a realistic path toward success

The first coping mechanism is to run from the situation A person may quit his job because he thinks that he can never communicate successfully with certain people How does this come about? In many modern organizations effective technicians are rewarded with positions

of formal leadership They are promoted (as a result of technical competence) to supervisory or managerial positions Often the skills required for technical work as a research scientist, an engineer, a doctor, a floor nurse, or a teacher are not the same as those needed for managerial and supervisory positions Expanded obligations to communicate and lack of skills in communication produce frustration

Sometimes such a person is wise to say, "OK, this is an important and valuable position, but at this stage in my life I am not willing to try a change of this nature So let me go back to being a practicing engineer rather than a unit manager, let me go back to practicing medicine rather than continuing to administer a hospital, let me return to the floor as a nurse rather than continuing as a supervisor, let me go back to teaching rather than continuing as a dean "

Usually, however, the person for his own good as well as the good of the organization should not abandon the new position He should develop the required skills needed to cope successfully with the tasks of leadership A withdrawal from the painful situation may be an unwise and immature solution

The second option when one becomes conscious of incompetence is to adopt a psychological defense mechanism A common mechanism is *rationalization*—giving a desirable reason for one's behavior rather than the real reason The manager may rationalize his lack of skill in communication as a sign of "good old-fashioned honesty and straightforwardness " He calls the manager who is perceptive of human relations a "wet nurse" or "mother " He tells himself that adapting communication to the knowledge and needs of his subordinates is a waste of time, unprofessional, and unnecessary After all, he reasons, he is dealing with "adults "

Another common defense mechanism is *projection* The person indulging in projection may blame his supervisor for not supplying adequate information He may blame a fellow worker for not trying to understand He may blame production, sales, or some other group in the organization In any event, he finds an error or flaw in someone else to account for his failure He projects his inability to communicate on those to whom he talks, thus avoiding self-blame

Another defense mechanism is *displacement* Displacement is an attractive immature alternative for high status individuals in an organization Instead of facing his problem, a person may take his frustration and anger out on someone not involved at all, doing something altogether inappropriate such as yelling, blaming, even hitting A supervisor can relieve his aggressions on a subordinate without the danger of a subordinate fighting back as would a peer

A final defense mechanism is *compensation* People who have recently been promoted to leadership often find themselves compensating

When a person assumes a new position he may find that he must do work he cannot as yet do well He finds such tasks threatening He may avoid the threat by ignoring the new functions and going back to practice the skills of his former job He may say to a subordinate, "Move over and let me *show* you how to do that" He does the work of his subordinates—work which he does well and which he enjoyed doing in the "good old days" before he assumed his leadership position Compensation in this form is damaging because it frustrates the subordinates by taking away their authority and responsibility and also because the leader spends his time doing their work while his own work goes undone

Rationalizing, projecting, or compensating when aware of incompetence is essentially unproductive and unrewarding It submerges the consciousness of incompetence and moves a person down to the level of unconscious incompetence

The third option is the mature one of getting professional counsel and undertaking corrective action The first step is the conscious awareness of lack of skill, the next is a thorough self-analysis to discover particular difficulties, and the final step is a systematic program of self-improvement The improvement of competence requires both a change of attitudes toward communication and drill on the necessary communication skills

UNCONSCIOUS COMPETENCE

When a person reaches the level of unconscious competence he is effective in communicating, but if he is asked, "How do you do it?" he cannot explain his skill People develop unconscious competence in two ways First, a skill that they cultivated consciously may become automatic For example, when a boy begins to shave he is conscious of every movement After some weeks of practice, he no longer cuts himself, and he shaves quickly and efficiently He has become consciously competent He keeps on practicing his skill and soon reaches a point where he is no longer aware of the technique of shaving He can think about other things while he is shaving He has arrived at the stage of unconscious competence

A second way to achieve unconscious competence is repetition without analysis of the skill Simply by trial and error a person may develop abilities A natural athlete may be able to hit 330 without being able to coach batting or explain how he hits the ball

Unconscious competence has value, as illustrated by the man who can meet routine requirements and free his mind for other tasks But it is not a sufficient skill for handling the communication problems faced by individuals, particularly leaders, in the modern organization Many

communication problems are not routine Also, one of the responsibilities of a leader is to develop the potential of his subordinates The manager who does a good job of using and developing the human resources within his unit must have a conscious understanding of the skills of communication in terms of the needs of the people who report to him

CONSCIOUS COMPETENCE

A person who is consciously competent knows the human factors in the communication situation, including the barriers that he must overcome He knows the resources he can draw upon and he has the necessary sending and receiving skills to implement his communication plan The consciously competent person knows that successful speech-communication requires careful planning He is sensitive to the other person's reactions and flexible enough to interpret feedback and adjust his communication

The consciously competent communicator knows he must adapt to the relevant factors in changing situations Briefly, he knows what he is doing, and why it works—or fails to work

RELEVANT FACTORS IN THE COMMUNICATION SYSTEM

Earlier we noted that communication was a process involving a speaker evoking a meaning in a listener Several relevant elements comprise the communication event The first factors relate to the source Why is the source communicating? What is he communicating about? The subject of the message need not be the same as its purpose A message is often a means to achieve a related purpose

The second set of factors relates to the receiver Who is the receiver? What are the purposes of the receiver? Is he talking about the same thing the source is talking about? What are the receiver's interests, needs, and abilities?

The third group of factors concerns the manner in which the source is communicating, namely the way he encodes the message, the kinds of stimuli he uses to evoke the response, and the emotional tone as well as the words he uses

The fourth factor is the time of the communication Proper timing involves an accurate assessment of the receiver's readiness to listen, understand, and accept a given message

A fifth group of factors involves the context in which the source and receiver interact Is the setting in the speaker's office? The receiver's? During working hours? In a bar after work? At coffee break in the cafeteria? The context includes written and unwritten rules Rules often dic-

tate from whom and to whom communication flows Contextual factors specify receivers for a given man, the nature of the content of his messages, the frequency with which he sends, and how people treat his messages

The consciously competent communicator is aware of all these "relevant factors" and others as well He is able to estimate their relative importance in any unit of communication The unconsciously competent person is handicapped because he must "feel his way" through the maze of variables, whereas his consciously competent rival can calculate his course A big advantage of attaining conscious competence is freeing oneself from limitations of intuition and habit

When one communicates he makes predictions about the appropriateness of the message content, media, tone, and timing as these factors relate to whom, where, when, and why he is communicating The source of a message must remember David Berlo's warning that while one should base his attempts to communicate on all he knows, what a person does know is only part of what is known, and even all that is known is only part of what is knowable Because of gaps in his knowledge and variations in an individual's level of motivation each person may perform on each level of competence at some time on any given day

Speech-Communication and the Psychology of the Individual

In our basic model of the process of speech-communication we begin with an individual who wishes to initiate communication A number of events have occurred that arouse in the source a desire to send a message For example, there is a new sales quota and procedures must be changed to meet it, or a new production deadline is set, or new people have been hired and they must be trained Perhaps the person initiating the message is trying to persuade his organization to expand its functions

TRANSFORMERS

An electric transformer is an instrument that modifies current and voltage The transformer reshapes in important ways the electricity that passes through it Individuals, too, have "transformers" analogous to the electrical transformer that reshape their perceptions Because of a person's intellectual capacity, emotional development, and experience he sees the world and responds to messages in his own peculiar way

In the process of communication both listener and speaker bring sets of transformers to the transaction Each passes symbols and other

stimuli through these transformers that give expression and interpretation of messages an individual, sometimes even unique, meaning

PHYSICAL CONDITION AS A TRANSFORMER

An important factor in human perception and response is the physical condition of the individual We can all recall times when we have been ill and our response to messages was influenced by our sickness We can think of occasions when we were tired and our ability to speak or listen was impaired A number of studies have investigated the energy level of people as related to their behavior The research reveals that human beings have a changing profile that represents their energy levels throughout the 24-hour day An individual's energy curve affects his communication pattern He would be wise to plan his activities to exploit the peaks of energy

EMOTIONAL MOOD AS A TRANSFORMER

People are happy at times and sad at others Sometimes they are angry, sometimes frightened The emotional condition of an individual at a particular moment affects how he perceives the world and how he responds to it For example, frightened people cannot work consistently at the peak of their ability, they tend to search messages for ominous hidden meanings (For more on the subject of emotions, see Chapter 14)

INTELLECTUAL CAPACITY AS A TRANSFORMER

Psychologists have discovered that the greater the intellectual capacity of an individual, the more stimuli the person receives and the larger his repertoire of responses Certainly, human speech is one of the most complicated of enterprises One of the big differences between man and other species is that man is able to use connected speech to discuss time in three dimensions—past, present, and future—as it relates to himself and his environment

PAST EXPERIENCE AS A TRANSFORMER

A fourth transformer is a person's experience in the form of learned behavior An individual's history has a great deal to do with his attitudes toward himself, toward others, and toward organizations The interpretation of an event by people with specialized interests, as for example, the anecdote about the descriptions of an automobile accident given by a doctor, a lawyer, and an automobile mechanic, illustrates this

point. The doctor concentrates on the injuries to the participants, the lawyer on the assessment of liability, and the mechanic on the damage to the machines. Each is responding in a manner that is consistent with his experience, training, and resultant interests.

Language plays an important role in the way an individual interprets and shapes his experience. One learns the language common to his culture. Persons who share a language usually perceive the world in a similar way so that they will find it less difficult to come to an understanding. In addition, every individual learns a vocabulary and a way of speaking that is his own.

Without language the world impinges upon our senses as a kaleidoscope of changing shapes and colors and a hum and buzzing of noises. With language, however, we impose order and system on the flow of stimuli that reach us. We begin to discern patterns in our surroundings, and our language furnishes us with words to name the patterns. Every individual transforms his experience according to the language he learned and the emotional aura surrounding the way he learned it. Word connotations are highly individual and varied.

Clyde Kluckhohn in the "Gift of Tongues" from *Mirrors for Man* points out that language does more than convey ideas, arouse feelings, and provide self-expression. Language serves to categorize experience. Every person selects from his surroundings certain items to attend to and certain others to ignore. Some things a person highlights and others he neglects. Every culture has its own characteristic categories in which it "pigeonholes" its collective experience. Each community's experience helps form the language that orders its world and each new member is, in turn, indoctrinated into the culture by learning its language and with it the community's world view. For example, certain cultures in the Far North developed languages with different words for the experience that is called, in English, "snow." Similarly, cultures in the tropical region have few, if any, categories for that phenomenon.

In most organizations the work groups and formal subdivisions develop their own "language" or "jargon." These technical languages often reflect the interests and specializations of the units, but they may become blinders to perception and hinder the inter-group communication. In addition, the group may protect their expertness by the use of a technical vocabulary. One organization attempted to get each unit to define their 100 most often used "technical" terms for a projected dictionary to facilitate inter-group communication. Some units resisted the attempt to get them to release "lodge secrets." Apparently some of their members were using language to establish prestige and control others.

A person responds to his environment like a computer. A computer will process data according to the way it has been programmed.

An individual's experience, although infinitely more complex, serves somewhat the same function as a computer program He will respond and process data according to the way he has been taped by past experience

INDIVIDUAL AND GROUP GOALS AS TRANSFORMERS

The last set of transformers consists of the goals toward which a person is directed What an individual holds important and significant and what he will strive to achieve shape his interpretation of messages

Goals differ as to their importance and complexity Some goals are personal, trivial, and transitory, others are personal but important and long-term Some long-term goals may be so important that an individual will dedicate his life to them Still other goals are shared by a group and may be important to the welfare of a number of people, as was seen in Chapter 6 People communicate for many different reasons Sometimes they simply wish to make contact with other human beings, sometimes they talk in order to express their feelings, sometimes to give or get information, and sometimes to persuade or be persuaded Within the context of a given communication event each participant will have some particular intent that he wishes to fulfill

In addition to the enhancement of self, most individuals will have other goals important to them, such as the education of children, the protection of the family, and the building of an organizational empire Other goals such as the improvement of the neighborhood or backing a political candidate may be less self-centered

Some goals of importance to individuals are actually or ostensibly shared by all members of a group For example, the goals of the sales department, although related, may be different from the goals of the production division Sometimes individuals within a group supposedly sharing common goals actually have different goals Such a situation may interfere with the communicative process because people assume that goals are identical and cannot understand why messages are perceived so differently

An example of this problem is furnished by six engineers who were working together on a project They experienced such a severe breakdown in communication that they sought help from a consultant The consultant asked, "What are the goals of your particular operation?" They scoffed at the question and answered, "The goals are obvious" But he persisted "No, let's get them down on paper" The engineers finally consented to write down a list of goals They all mentioned three important objectives (1) turning out the product within a certain time,

(2) turning out the product so that it met certain quality standards, and (3) turning out the product within certain cost limits

Next the communication consultant asked the engineers to list the three goals *in order of importance* The six engineers ordered the three goals in three different ways Two said that turning the product out within the budget was the most important objective, two said "meeting the deadline", and the remaining two said that meeting the quality standards held top priority While all six agreed on the three most important objectives, the differing view of their relative importance served as transformers to shape both encoding and decoding Since they were unaware of their differences they found varying responses to the same communication frustrating and confusing

Transformers and the Process of Communication

THE GENERAL PROCESS OF COMMUNICATION

Although we have concentrated on speech-communication, in the broadest sense of the term, communication may take place through a wide variety of messages other than the spoken word Some of the other elements in the speech-communication situation add meanings to the spoken messages and, although they are not our main concern, we need to include them in the basic model of speech-communication presented in Chapter 2

Variations in vocal inflection, loudness patterns, and the rate of speech are, of course, an integral part of the speech-communication process We have assumed but not stressed their importance Suffice it to say that receivers often interpret the speaker's sincerity, intent, emotion, and attitude from clues contained in the *way* the words are spoken Generally, people believe the manner rather than the matter It is not difficult to say, "Have you seen the new secretary? Wow!" in such a way that the listener may interpret the message as meaning The speaker thinks the new secretary is an especially attractive girl Nor is it difficult to say the very same words in such a way that the listener decides the speaker thinks the new secretary is extremely ugly

Variations in pitch inflection, loudness, and rate of speech also furnish emphasis and oral punctuation Thus, by pausing at the proper place and using the proper pitch inflection a sentence like, "Woman without her man is a beast," can be spoken so that the listener understands it to mean something about a woman's need for a man, or with different pauses and inflections to imply that it means something about

man's need for woman. Because visual stimuli are absent, telephoned messages are heavily dependent upon pauses, inflections, and the quality of the voice.

Although gestures and facial expressions are filtered out of messages transmitted by telephone or radio, they are a part of much speech-communication. The person who sits slouched in his chair at a meeting, doodling on the pad before him, apparently unaware of the discussion, is sending a nonverbal message to the others. As with vocal inflections, the receiver tends to believe the gesture rather than the word. If a person leans his face in his hand with a sigh and says with a tired expression, "I am very excited about the new line," his listeners are not likely to believe him.

Many managers use the arrangement of furniture in their offices to communicate. A supervisor has two chairs for visitors. One is opposite his desk and the other beside it. When he wants to stress a formal relationship in which his status is emphasized, he has the visitor sit in the chair opposite the desk. The desk then serves to suggest a professional distance. On the other hand, when he wishes to establish an informal relationship and to minimize any status differences, he has his guest sit beside him with no object between them.

The superintendent of a state psychiatric hospital received word of a surprise inspection tour by a group of state legislators. He knew that the lawmakers would want to interview some patients about the conditions in the hospital, so he called his staff together and asked their advice about a suitable candidate for such an interview. They decided on a patient who had no history of violence and who was in a relatively euphoric state, hence unlikely to complain about the food or the living conditions.

In due course the inspection of the grounds, the wards, and the kitchen was complete, and one of the legislators asked to talk with an inmate. He was given an opportunity to interview the euphoric patient. After conversing with him for a bit, the legislator started to leave the room. At that point the patient leaped upon the legislator, grabbed him by the throat, and wrestled him to the floor. The cries of the victim brought the attendants on the run and they separated patient and visitor. After the superintendent had calmed the lawmaker as best he could and the inspection party had departed, he asked that the patient be brought to him.

"What in the world happened?" he asked. "You have been quiet and relatively satisfied here. What caused you to attack that man?"

"Oh," the patient replied, "he expected me to."

The nonverbal components in the speech situation were interpreted by the patient. Because he *knew* that the legislator expected in-

mates to be violent and dangerous, the patient's transformers interpreted the legislator's actions to meet his own expectations

TRANSFORMERS AND THE PROCESS OF SPEECH-COMMUNICATION

The process of speech-communication includes an individual with a set of transformers (physical condition, emotional state, intellectual capacity, past experience, goals) interpreting a series of events and responding to these stimuli by deciding to initiate communication He begins with an intent (immediate goal) and encodes a message that he transmits to the receiver The message is transmitted by the spoken word with its inflections, by gesture, by behavior, and by the manipulation of things in the environment

The receiver interprets the message in terms of his own transformers and part of his response becomes a reciprocal message for the source who started the communication That is, when the original message is received the listener may react by speaking, gesturing, or moving in a significant way The person who began the interchange then becomes the receiver for the messages encoded by the original listener, starting the feedback cycle

If one views the entire communicative event from a perspective that includes internal transformers, organizational and small group context, and verbal as well as nonverbal messages, one is impressed by its complexity It is small wonder that every attempt to communicate results in at least a partial misunderstanding

As we noted in Chapter 2, communication is not a simple matter of a sender transmitting a message to a receiver Realistically, it is a reciprocal interaction, a give-and-take in which each party must participate actively Each alternates from sender to receiver and back to sender again The consciously competent communicator is aware of the reciprocal interaction and the transformers that always modify the interpretation and expression of messages, and plans his communication to allow for and take advantage of the transformers

A Summary of Advice for Planning Person-to-Person Communication

The person planning any significant communication should use the following checklist of questions to guide his preparation

1 What do I wish to accomplish as a result of this communication? (More specifically, what response do I want my receivers to make as a result of the messages that I send them?)

2 Do the receivers have the ability, the motivation, and power (not just authority) to make the responses that I desire to result from the message?

3 Am I the best person to help these people make the desired response? Are my relationships with them such that it might be better to turn to a third party to implement the communication? (One of the well documented results of communication research is that the very same message will get a different response if it is attributed to varied sources Thus, the same message attributed to the receptionist, the sales manager, or the plant manager will have a different impact)

4 What resistance might there be because of the transformers within the receivers? Will response be influenced by the receivers' physical condition? Emotional condition? What do I know about their knowledge, past experiences, goals, and values? (Whenever we communicate we make some important guesses We hypothesize that our objective is possible We predict that our message is such that it will accomplish the objective We predict that our choice of inputs and channels is optimum)

The Basic Realities of Communication

To summarize, we can best illustrate the complexities of person-to-person communication and suggest the attitudes and knowledge required to accommodate to them by stating the five basic realities of communication

REALITY I Many times others interpret something a person says or does or *fails to say or do* as a message when the person did not consciously intend it to be one

REALITY II Meanings are in people not in words A receiver interprets a message by attaching his own meanings to it The person who is unaware of the fact that meanings are in people often ends up crying, "But I told them!"

REALITY III The ability to communicate is a learned behavior and, as in all learning, reward and punishment determine how the individual behaves People tend to send those messages which they think will maximize their rewards and minimize their punishment The manager who is unaware of this reality is told only the "good news" "How are things going?" he may ask "Fine, boss" Only when the crisis reaches such a proportion that it can no longer be concealed does the manager discover the trouble and he reproaches the subordinate "But why didn't you tell me?"

REALITY IV The normal result of an attempt to communicate is a partial misunderstanding The great enemy of successful communica-

tion is the illusion of it Every attempt to communicate results in the arousal of somewhat different meanings on the part of the source and the receiver The question becomes how large a margin of difference can be tolerated in a given case For example, if the supervisor asks for a "model job," and the employee returns with a small working model when the manager wanted a production model, the difference is great enough to make a difference In the mental institution the psychiatrist may say to the nurse, "I want you to be in control at all times" To the doctor the message means the nurse must maintain control over herself (self-control), but if the nurse interprets the message to mean rigid discipline in restricting the behavior of the patients, the difference again is significant But most misunderstandings are not of this magnitude The main point is that a certain amount of misunderstanding in the initial stages of communication is normal, not pathological Through feedback, necessary corrections can be made

REALITY V When communication breaks down, a normal response is to ask, "Whose fault is it?" Someone is assigned the blame, he denies it, and time and energy are expended in defense and attack The manager who is aware of this reality has just as many initial misunderstandings in his communication, but because he is results-oriented his first question is, "What do we need to do to achieve sufficient understanding to accomplish our objectives?"

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Barriers to Communication

CHAPTER 9

In this chapter we will discuss the three major sources of communication breakdowns in organizations misunderstanding, disagreement, and misinformation The three major sources of trouble are not mutually exclusive but interact dynamically to cause trouble in places ranging from 183 Mt Curve Avenue to factories of major industries and the offices of large service organizations

What do you mean? How do you know? What difference does it make? Am I responding in terms of our objectives or of my own ego needs? The above questions sound simple, but we are often unable to answer them The less able we are to answer such questions, the more defensive we become When one party to a communicative interchange becomes defensive the entire enterprise is jeopardized A subordinate asked a superior a question The superior answered and the subordinate said, "That wasn't my question" To which the superior replied, "That's my answer" Sending a subordinate off to find a suitable question to match an answer is no way to establish understanding

THE PROBLEM OF UNDERSTANDING

What Do You Mean?

In Chapter 6 we discussed the fact that the magic question, "What do you mean?" is seldom raised in organizational conferences Those four words, "What do you mean?" would go a long way to clearing up a myriad of misunderstandings if people would simply use them We have tried giving class members instructions to interrupt a student speaker whenever they did not understand The results were astounding Speaker after speaker found himself interrupted repeatedly, and a five-minute talk often required twenty minutes to complete

A word is a stimulus that arouses a response within the listener That response is conditioned by past experience and influenced by the present state of the person Words like *Democrat, Republican, labor, management, staff, line* can evoke vastly different connotations depending upon the individual's organizational position, political background, and past experience

Even less controversial terms like *good job* or *do it quickly* may arouse widely different meanings in different people What might be a "good job" for Mr A may be a "miserable job" for Mr B How often has a husband called upstairs, "How soon will you be ready to go?" only to get the answer, "I'll be down in a jiffy" If he asks further, "How long is a jiffy?" she answers, "Just a couple of minutes" The husband often discovers that a couple of minutes does not mean 2 or 4 as he thought it did, but that to his wife it means 15 or 30

Let us place the problem in an organization context In one organization the following policy exists If an employee is given an *overall* rating of unsatisfactory, action must be taken to change his behavior or to terminate his employment Under such circumstances the employee has a right to appeal the rating, and the superior must then produce evidence to substantiate the evaluation

A young supervisor found himself reviewing the performance of a subordinate who had 20 years with the company The supervisor felt that the man had technical skills well above the average and that his overall performance was satisfactory The supervisor did feel, however, that the subordinate needed to improve his managerial techniques Unfortunately, before the supervisor praised the subordinate's technical skills and gave him his overall rating of satisfactory, the young manager used the word "unsatisfactory" with reference to the subordinate's ability The word "unsatisfactory" was like a red flag The subordinate immediately assumed it was applied to his overall rating He quickly appealed

the decision to higher authority The result was total confusion Members of the organization took sides, and the entire problem snowballed until finally an outsider had to be called in to cut through the emotional responses of the participants and discover what the term "unsatisfactory" was intended to mean

MISUNDERSTANDINGS

Attitudes play an important part in creating and resolving misunderstandings For example, if one expects the result of communication to be partial misunderstanding, then he is less likely to be frustrated and more likely to concentrate on reducing the misunderstanding

The Proper Orientation for Understanding

Let us return for a moment to our speech-communication model The source attempting to achieve a specific objective may be preoccupied with (1) himself and his objective, (2) the message, or (3) the receiver and the receiver's objectives

SOURCE-ORIENTATION

The naive and ego centered speaker is often primarily source-oriented He is interested in himself and his own tensions and motives He assumes that everyone possesses the same meanings for words that he does, and his immediate objective is the satisfaction and reinforcement of his own ego He makes statements like, "I know . . . ," "We at Finster Tool and Die know . . . ," "I have been in this business 30 years . . ." The self-oriented sources of messages are their own most enchanted listeners They are interested in their receivers only as reinforcing claques for their insecure egos Their messages are not designed to arouse meanings in a target audience but rather are expressive cries resulting from problems of personal adjustment In the organizational setting such "expressive" messages are often camouflaged as communication with a task-oriented purpose, but the speaker is not interested in doing the job, he is simply attempting to relieve his own feelings

MESSAGE-ORIENTATION

Somewhat less naive but still inadequate are those individuals who are primarily interested in the message Technical specialists, doc-

tors, ministers, and college professors often fit into the category of speakers preoccupied with the message Their speech is filled with technical information often couched in the latest jargon If the receivers happen to be members of the in-group, if they share the subculture, the messages may be effective However, if the receivers are not conversant with the latest technical jargon, they become confused, sleepy, or angry because the message is not adjusted to their needs Sometimes a source that seems to be message-oriented may be ego-centered Specialists often use technical jargon to impress their authority upon the layman They speak rapidly and provide little opportunity for feedback They use as many technical terms as possible and end up giving the receiver(s) the impression that "You'll just have to take my word for it The subject is too technical for you to understand" In other words, the individual uses his communication as a smoke screen to cloak his authority and to keep others from questioning his pronouncements The semanticist S I Hayakawa phrases the point satirically when he says, "You cannot be respected as a scholar if people understand what you say"

RECEIVER-ORIENTATION

Consciously competent individuals are primarily receiver-oriented when they attempt to achieve an objective through speech communication If one is interested in the results of the message beyond whatever ego-gratification comes from expressing feelings, then he must help his receivers achieve understanding of his meanings The source and the message are important only as they contribute to gaining the desired action from the receiver(s) Hence, the favored attitude for a person interested in communicating to accomplish specific objectives is to be receiver-oriented

Feedback and Understanding

Attitudes are important to conscious competence, but to have an effect on the reduction of misunderstandings, attitudes must modify action The source translates his preoccupation with the receiver into action through the development of skills in encouraging and interpreting feedback

Throughout the book we mention the importance of feedback Here we will give some specific advice on how feedback can be encouraged Before we do so, however, we will mention some characteristics of feedback that are puzzling and that cause many misunderstandings

First, feedback is troublesome A person who wishes feedback

must make the effort to encourage, observe, and interpret it One must force himself out of his immediate personal concerns and away from the message and concentrate attention on the receivers

Second, feedback is time-consuming The one feature of feedback that comes as the greatest surprise is that it requires a speaker to take more time to communicate Participants in communication seminars for organizational managers are amazed how long it takes to adequately explain something when the listeners are encouraged to provide feedback

Third, feedback is often emotionally disturbing When we find out what our receivers really think of us or how they interpret a message we often get angry People appear not to have the high opinion of us we thought they did They do not find our style of management as pleasant as we thought they did We are not as competent in skills of exposition or persuasion as we thought we were

Every consciously competent communicator must learn to invest the time and effort required and must learn to live with and handle the tension that accompanies unfavorable feedback In Chapter 7 in our discussion of group meetings, we noted that disagreements cause tension Yet, without a climate of trust in which negative feedback is encouraged, a meeting of the minds is difficult, if not impossible

Barriers to Feedback

STATUS BARRIER TO FEEDBACK

Subordinates discover what the boss wants to hear and they often become proficient in tailoring messages to feed his vanity The familiar children's story of "The Emperor's New Clothes" is a good example of the unwillingness of subordinates to tell the leader the realities of a situation Leaders of organizations are too often left, like the Emperor, naked and ineffective when faced with the facts because their subordinates felt it necessary to inhibit free and honest feedback

John W Gardner, who has served as president of the Carnegie Foundation, and as Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare, has done extensive research into what makes an organization remain alive and effective in a changing world He concludes that the effective organization must be willing to entertain diverse views He puts it this way

> Freedom of communication insures that new ideas will be brought into confrontation with the old Perhaps the most important characteristic of an ever-renewing system is that it has built in provision for vigorous criticism And since the spirit that welcomes non-conformity is a fragile thing, the organization must honestly make those who

would criticize feel safe and unthreatened Most people are not willing to risk punishment in this kind of situation

Status differences also accentuate the problem of the message-oriented speaker If the source of a message has higher organizational status than the receiver(s), the source tends to assume that the message will be interpreted literally However, when the communication is sent down organizational channels, the listeners try to hear undertones of deeper meaning The person with lesser status is concerned with his personal relationship to the man who has fate control over him He wonders whether the boss likes him, is impressed with his work, or has plans to reward or punish him The subordinate may search messages too carefully He may read a good deal more into the message than the boss put into it The subordinate may interpret the message to mean that he is about to get a raise, get fired, or promoted, when actually the manager had no such intent

The manager, on the other hand, has a supervisory relationship with several people His attention is therefore diffused through his span of command He views each individual relationship as less important because he supervises a number of people He often assumes that the subordinate will assign the same importance to a message that he does He may search for feedback only on the basis of the importance of the message to him and to his total communication rather than its importance to the subordinate The manager thus becomes a type of source-centered communicator

The high status individual who fails to search for feedback either because he is message- or source-centered fails to pick up cues that indicate potential trouble He misses the feedback that could tell him that some remark he thought incidental is a statement of great importance to the receiver

THE MISTAKEN IMAGE BARRIER TO FEEDBACK

In Chapter 2 we discussed the four major functions of a leader (1) establishing objectives, (2) directing the attainment of objectives through job clarification, (3) reviewing performance, and (4) seeing that problems are solved Too often the superior communicates to his subordinates, by manner as well as by words, that he thinks of himself as a person who sets objectives and reviews performance When a manager gives his subordinates the impression that he does not have the responsibility to clarify the nature of the job or to aid in the solution of problems, he erects a barrier against feedback If the others perceive the leader as a person who feels, "My job is to tell you what to do and how

well you have done it," they are naturally reticent to ask for clarification or for help when they face a problem

The leader ought to give the impression that he is available to help when people have difficulties They should know that they can go to him, tell him about their problems, and find out where help can be obtained without fear of punishment

In many modern organizations the leader's own ego-needs account for his failure to project the image of a complete manager Particularly, many people in positions of leadership find it difficult to function as problem-solvers The situation is aggravated when some subordinates have specialized in technical fields, so that in their areas of competence they know more than the manager Understandably, a leader of such a group may feel insecure in trying to help his men overcome difficulties If they ask for help, he fears his lack of knowledge and skill will destroy his image as a leader If the leader is not careful, he will soon give the impression that he is open only to those questions to which he knows the answer

A person who has trouble functioning as group problem-solver because of his fear of destroying his image as leader has an unrealistic view of the manager's role in the modern organization No one individual can be the source of all knowledge No person is infallible The problem-solving function does not require that the manager personally possess the knowledge and information required to make the correct decision or develop the best solution The manager need only help to *coordinate* the necessary resources to develop the answer

The sooner the leader becomes honest with himself and open with his group, the earlier effective communication, feedback, and organizational action can occur In the cohesive group, as we saw in Chapter 6, the leader does not lose status by admitting that he does not know Learning to admit shortcomings in specialized knowledge will go a long way in eliminating the false-image barrier to feedback

Eight Steps to Encouraging Adequate Feedback

1 *Tell people you want feedback* Encourage people to speak up and raise questions and disagree Taking a moment to comment on the usefulness of a question or the necessity of disagreement will start feedback In Chapter 8 we mentioned the nonverbal elements in speech-communication They are of crucial importance in impressing upon others that the source is sincere in his interest in feedback

One of the authors taught a seminar in communication for presidents and vice-presidents of small industrial firms In one session the

president of a small corporation spoke up in a voice so commanding that every head turned to see the speaker He said, "I attended this seminar for one purpose I have an open-door policy Every man in my organization knows that my door is always open " His voice grew louder, "Every one of my men knows that if he has any problem or anything at all he wants to talk to me about, he can come right through my door and sit right beside my desk and tell me But nobody ever comes Why not? I want the answer to that question That's why I'm here " When he finished, the instructor and most of the participants felt as intimidated as his employees must have

When talking to an employee of a firm whose manager had a similar open-door policy, one of the authors asked why more people did not take advantage of the opportunity to discuss things with the boss The employee silently raised his extended forefinger like a knife and drew it across his throat

2 *Identify the areas in which you want feedback* Indiscriminate feedback consisting of personal grievances, idle talk, and personal axgrinding is wasteful If everyone in the organization knows the topics on which feedback is encouraged, it makes it easier to speak up when appropriate The choice of feedback areas should be made on the basis of what needs to be known for the good of the organization

3 *Set aside time for regularly scheduled feedback sessions* Treatment of an illness is more costly and time-consuming than preventive care Similarly, remedial effort to deal with a major organizational crisis is more time-consuming and emotionally punishing than steps taken to prevent the crisis Feedback sessions should be regularly scheduled This procedure is far better than waiting until the problems accumulate A good feedback session takes planning and effort It seldom results from an impulsive, "How are things going?"

4 *Use silence to encourage feedback* If a person wants the other fellow to speak up, he ought to remain silent and wait If he waits long enough, the other person will begin to communicate If he listens and encourages continued communication verbally and nonverbally, the other person will usually provide feedback

5 *Watch for nonverbal responses* Most people are unable to censor their nonverbal responses The honest message often is transmitted via gesture and posture Most of us learned this when we were young children and some "gracious" visitor gushed, "My, what a lovely child," while edging away from our peanut butter and jelly-coated hands As Al Capp says, "He smiled with his teeth but not with his eyes " The source-oriented person often forgets to pay attention to the nonverbal

cues emitted by the receiver As we saw above, the dynamics of the organization put pressure upon its members to pay more attention to both the verbal and nonverbal communications of its high status personnel Conversely, the organization puts pressure upon its personnel to ignore the communications from individuals of lower status Thus, high status people tend to ignore the nonverbal cues that might provide them with feedback about responses to the messages they send down the status ladder

6 *Ask questions* Chapter 7 discusses the use of questions in small groups Questions are equally useful in all interpersonal communication The speaker must be certain that his question is fully understood before he responds to the answer All of us who have given oral examinations have discovered how often a question is misinterpreted One understandable tendency of students is to misinterpret the question they will have trouble answering

Often deep conflict within an organization results from the answer to a question that was given a different interpretation by the parties involved Once such a conflict escalates, it becomes difficult for even a mature individual to stop, recover his poise, and ask calmly, "Just a minute Exactly what did your question mean?"

One way to overcome the disparity of meaning that various individuals associate with terms is to ask for a definition What do you mean by "unsatisfactory"? What do you mean by "full responsibility"? Do you mean "control of the budget"? Questions such as the above will aid in eliciting the feedback required to increase understanding Ask, What? why? when? where? how? Ask, What is your opinion? How would you react to this suggestion?

Another way to check the fidelity of communication is to force feedback, to ask the receiver to restate the message in his own words However, it is better if the receiver initiates such feedback himself If the receiver says, "Let me see if I have this straight As I understand you ," and if he then provides a restatement of the gist of the message, there is less chance of feelings being hurt Sometimes to ask the receiver to restate a communication sends a nonverbal message to the effect, "You stupid fellow Can you respond like a child in kindergarten and tell me what I just said Let's check and see "

7 *Use statements that encourage feedback* To encourage a person to provide feedback one can say, "I see," or "That's interesting," or "Tell me more about it " To stimulate clarification one can restate To indicate to the other person that one is listening and trying to understand how the other fellow feels one can say, "You feel that ," or "If I understand this is what you are saying "

8 *Reward feedback* Finally, we should reward those who give us feedback Promotions, more money, and more authority are obvious means of reward But often oral or written recognition can be effective rewards for those who tell us what we need to know If one decides to write a complimentary note to a man, it might be well to forward a copy to the next higher supervisor with a notation on the bottom of the note indicating that the copy has been sent

DISAGREEMENT

Productive Disagreement

One should not be beguiled by the attractive half-truth that understanding leads to agreement Understanding implies that the source knows what meanings the receiver attaches to the message or vice versa, not that they attach the same meanings Understanding what another means does not guarantee that an individual will agree with the assertion A person might discover that the speaker puts all managers into two categories, (1) good, tough managers and (2) bad, weak managers In the first category are leaders who "don't waste time with talk, they just issue the order and that's that" In the second category are those who let their people know that they are important We might understand what such a person means when he calls someone a good or bad manager, but the understanding might lead to vigorous disagreement

We may recall here our extensive discussion of disagreement in Chapter 7 and its effect on the social climate of group meetings, as well as its importance to productivity Some disagreement is absolutely necessary to produce new ideas, to test information, and to question policies and procedures Productive disagreement assures that the organization's information is sound, that its procedures are screened, and that its policies are checked before resources are committed and action is taken Disagreement that functions to improve efficiency is productive Of course, even productive disagreement causes secondary tensions and strains the social fabric of the organization

Disruptive Disagreement

Not all disagreement is productive Disruptive disagreement is that which obstructs the achievement of the organization's objectives and destroys open and honest human relationships

The easiest way to produce disruptive misunderstanding and disagreement is to speak to another in such a way that the receiver feels the communication to be an attack on his person Whenever two people communicate two or more agenda are under discussion, some hidden, some open

HIDDEN AGENDA

In most discussions the participants acknowledge the purpose of the interchange and talk about topics openly The business meeting may have an open agenda, such as the discussion in Information Systems over the adequacy of the new facilities for the buyers A superior may call a subordinate into his office for a brief talk about scheduling the subordinate's vacation In all such situations at least one and perhaps more topics of concern to the source and the receiver(s) are not discussed directly but nonetheless play an important part The topics of concern that are not openly discussed constitute a *hidden agenda*

In the case of the meeting to discover the problem of the buyers' rebellion at Information Systems an important hidden agenda topic was· Why do the engineers have offices when we do not? Is it because the organization does not think our work is as important as theirs? In every situation one important hidden agenda item relates to the establishment, protection, and enhancement of each individual's self-image Whenever a party to the communication feels his desired image of himself is threatened, the climate is conducive to disruptive disagreement Figure 9 de-

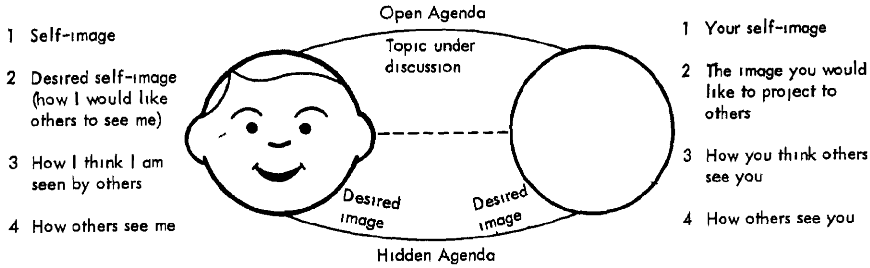

Figure 9 Images of Self that Act as Variables in Communication

picts the typical situation While two people ostensibly talk over a common problem they are simultaneously projecting and protecting their desired image In an important way we all have potentially split personalities when we talk to others Each of us is divided at least four ways, and thus in every interpersonal communication eight personalities are interacting

One has a private image of himself Sometimes a person develops defenses to insulate himself from the kind of person he really is The

old Greek saying that was said to be the key to all knowledge was, Know thyself! The imperative wisely reflects that so often human beings blind themselves to what they really are

A second important image is the picture a person would like others to have of him Many relationships in everyday life have probably made the reader aware that a desire to project a favorable image is inherent in all of us

A third estimate of self comes from a person's impression of how the other individual in the communication situation sees him An influential school of sociologists finds the estimate of others such an important factor in the development of roles in society that they call the general impression a person has of how other people view him the *significant other* They would explain much social behavior on the basis that an individual develops a realistic impression of himself from the communication, verbal and nonverbal, that he gets from other people

Finally, the other person's actual estimate of an individual is one of the social realities of every communication situation Quite often the transformers within the other person distort reality, and his image of the first individual is not much more accurate than one's private image of himself

On rare occasions the various pictures that the source and receiver have about one participant, for example the source, may be in substantial agreement That is, in these instances, the speaker's image of himself, his desired image, how he thinks the listener sees him, and how the listener, in fact, does see him are much the same Under these ideal conditions disruptive disagreements are minimized Quite often, however, the pictures do not match When discrepancies occur disruptive disagreements often follow

DISCREPANCIES BETWEEN SELF-IMAGE AND DESIRED IMAGE

A person with a low opinion of himself may still want others to have a high opinion of him Such a person will be insecure in the organizational setting Recall the case of Henry Wolfson at Information Systems Henry rose so rapidly to a managerial position that he *never proved his ability to himself* His self-image therefore did not include the ability to do the important job of managing the procurement and personnel division Yet Henry enjoyed the rewards that the position gave him He wanted to keep his job Therefore, he wanted others to see him as an efficient and capable manager He lived in dread that any moment might bring the fact of his incompetence to the attention of both his subordinates and his superiors.

A person like Henry Wolfson is quick to interpret messages as personal attacks An insecure administrator reacts to disruptive disagreements as though they are high-tension wires When Bill Johnson went to talk to Henry Wolfson about changing the plans for the offices of the buyers, Wolfson took the communication personally and reacted violently He perceived Johnson's request for change as an attack on his ability to manage his unit Without consideration of the feasibility of the changes, he rejected them

A person who thinks he is not respected as he would like to be is likely to respond with hostility The person who wants to be seen as an authority and instead is viewed by and treated by his associates as an equal often becomes antagonistic and hostile

DISCREPANCIES BETWEEN DESIRED IMAGE AND PUBLIC IMAGE

Another type of communication problem stems from differences between the image a person wishes to project and the one his listeners actually have of him Take the case of the supervisor who is seen by his subordinates as an authoritative expert with all the answers He decides many of his administrative problems stem from his public image He would like to be seen as a coordinator and equal When he begins to communicate to his subordinates in ways intended to change his public image *they* can become insecure

Many subordinates like to look to the boss as the man with the answers Particularly when a necessary decision is unpopular, unpleasant, and painful, individuals are relieved if they can avoid the responsibility Many clergymen today are trying to get the members of their congregations to assume responsibility for church activities However, many of the church members typically feel uncomfortable and insecure in assuming responsibilities formerly delegated to leaders

Messages that ask for action that threatens the desired image also tend to cause disagreements For example, a conscientious mother attended a meeting for parents of children about to enter kindergarten She returned home full of enthusiasm and information that she wished to share with her five-year-old son Communication with her boy, however, did not go as she planned or hoped, the child was apparently uninterested in kindergarten He tried to change the subject and, obviously uncomfortable, became very fidgety His lack of interest irritated his mother Probably the boy's lack of enthusiasm was interpreted by the mother as an attack on her self-image as a good mother But more important to our point here, as the argument between mother and son got underway, a third person asked, "Jeffrey, are you a little afraid of going

to school?" That simple question opened a veritable fountain of communication

Jeffrey was afraid of the challenge and responsibility facing him School was six blocks away Could he find it? It was a long walk, would he arrive on time or would he be punished for being late? Would he have any friends at kindergarten? Jeff viewed his mother's messages as an attack on the maintenance of his self-image The action she was calling for was very threatening, and the threat was so strong that their conversation was disrupted

TYPES OF MESSAGES THAT ATTACK THE SELF-IMAGE

Jack Gibbs reports the results of research indicating that six specific message-perceptions often cause defensive reactions These are messages that are interpreted as (1) the source making an evaluation of the receiver as a person rather than of his performance, (2) the source attempting to exert control over the receiver, (3) the source attempting to use strategy on the receiver, (4) the source being disinterested in the receiver, (5) the source feeling superior to the receiver, and (6) the source being dogmatic and arbitrary

On occasion the above perceptions might not result in the receiver's becoming defensive For example, a person may not react negatively to an evaluation of himself if he feels it is presented from a point of view of equality rather than superiority, and if it seems to concentrate on a problem rather than on the source's control of the receiver Generally speaking, however, messages interpreted in any of Gibbs's six categories produce defensive reactions and thus often lead to disruptive disagreements

The best general solution to the problem of interpersonal clash is to acknowledge it and try to redirect the communication to the open agenda items Very often the "rational" problems cannot be solved until the personal differences are openly acknowledged, discussed, and accepted, eliminated, or compromised

Five Suggestions for Resolving Differences

1 *Develop a clinical point of view* When a disruptive disagreement develops ask, "Why is my partner in communication behaving this way?" Concentrating on the other man's needs and behavior helps one gain insight and avoids escalating the conflict Avoid flashing back a "the same to you" reaction that so often perpetuates a disruptive disagreement

2 *Take your time* Our first natural reaction when we are attacked is probably the wrong one Usually we become defensive We have a colleague who smokes a pipe, and when he is hit with a message that causes him to squirm, he habitually loads and lights his pipe before he answers Even those few moments while he tinkers with his pipe enable him to pause, take stock, and weigh his answer

Asking for more information often provides one with additional facts and inferences that modify response Perhaps what we interpreted as an attack was not an attack at all Perhaps extenuating circumstances go a long way to explain the disagreements If Henry Wolfson and Bill Johnson had talked a bit more during their ill-fated meeting the buyers' rebellion might have been averted If Bill Johnson had learned of Henry's problem with the delay of the installation, he might have realized that the timing was wrong for raising the major question of changing the plans for the new building On the other hand, if Henry had heard Bill out, he might have discovered that the buyers were mainly worried about the status implications of their new facilities and he could have taken steps to deal with that problem rather than try to deal with irrelevancies such as acoustics

One other point is that no person is ready to listen until he is through talking By asking for more information we enable our antagonist to talk himself out and he may then be more willing to listen

3 *Get a statement of goals* Ask the other person to state his criteria for a solution to the problem What would he consider a satisfactory outcome? What are his objectives in a given instance? If the parties to a disagreement can find some common goals, the disagreement may be channeled into productive consensus

In general, it is wise to attempt to find areas of agreement If those areas are common goals, the possibility of resolving differences is enhanced Even labor leaders and management representatives who differ sharply about how the income of a company should be divided can find agreement on the common goal to preserve the company In a sense they are in the same ship, and if it sinks, both sink with it

4 *Define areas of difference* The first step to a rational solution to differences of opinion is to define areas of agreement and clearly specify points of difference One method for clarifying disagreement is to hold off on a final decision until each party to a dispute can state the other's point of view to the other's satisfaction The same technique can be used to avoid the sometimes overlooked but equally important problem of agreement based upon misunderstanding In one business conference the vice-president said he was in agreement with the position of a regional sales manager The manager suggested that "Just to make sure

we do agree would you state my position as you understand it?" They then discovered that the vice-president did not agree and they were able to discuss the differences realistically and forestall a much greater disagreement later on

One area of disagreement that seems to be a point at issue but that often turns out to be a misunderstanding is the meaning of important terms Too often a heated argument ends after several hours when one party says, "Well, if that is what you mean by authoritarian leadership, then I agree with you But that is not authoritarian leadership, that is what I call democratic leadership"

Another area of disagreement may be related to differing goals and values When differences exist about objectives, the parties to the argument should clearly spell out their objectives and make certain that they understand one another Next, they ought to arrange the objectives in order of importance If they are still in disagreement, they might try to persuade one another of the wisdom of a given set of objectives (See Chapters 13 to 16 for advice on persuasion)

The disagreements may be based upon questions of fact Did or did not something happen? Generally, in a disagreement about facts one individual is wrong and the other right The differences should be easy to resolve by appropriate investigations Witnesses to the happening can testify as to what took place If the facts are still available for observation, the parties to the disagreement may go and check for themselves

"I did offer you an opportunity to come and check the architect's drawings early last year," the manager says

"You did not," says the subordinate

"I sent you a memorandum and still have a copy in my files"

"You did not send me a memorandum, and you cannot have it in the files because I never got it"

"All right Let's go look in my file and see"

The individuals in conflict may agree about what happened but differ as to what the facts prove That is, the inferences they make from the facts differ The manager above might say, "I sent you a memorandum"

"Yes you did But the memorandum simply said I could look at the plans."

"That's right"

"It did not say that I could offer suggestions or that the plans could be changed in any way. It did not ask me for my opinion or indicate that by looking at the plans I could alter them at all It simply said look at the plans if you want to"

"But you didn't look at them."

"No, I didn't see any point"

"But the memorandum clearly suggested that the blueprints were here, and you could look at them and see what you thought."

"Sure, I could see what I thought but that's all."

"No, and express your thinking and perhaps change the plans."

"No, it did not mean that at all."

Opposing lawyers in criminal cases often agree upon certain verified facts. The gun did serve as the murder weapon. It does have John Doe's fingerprints on it. The facts demonstrate that John Doe did maliciously murder his wife in the first degree, so says the prosecuting attorney. "Oh, not at all," states the defense attorney. "Jane Doe accosted John with the gun in her hand. He wrestled with her and tried to take it away. In the scuffle it accidentally was discharged and she was killed. At worst it was homicide and certainly not first degree murder."

5. *Allow others to maintain their self-respect.* Keep in balance the objectives of the organization, the work group, and your own self-respect. One does not need to win if the problem is solved and a good decision made. Remember, not every conflict should end in personal victory. Some end optimally in retreat or defeat for the individual, some in compromise, some in arbitration, and some in postponement of the decision until another time.

MISINFORMATION

The last major source of communication problems within the organization is misinformation. A universal antidote that should be administered frequently is the key question, "How do you know?"

Message Processing for Communication of Information

One important function of a message processing system is to inform the personnel in an organization at all levels about pertinent events in the external world and about the internal workings of the unit. Leaders need information about the "outside" in order to develop policy and courses of action. They must also receive information concerning the implementation of their programs in order to evaluate, diagnose, and improve them. They need to know how well the organization is achieving its objectives, the morale of the members, and how the changing environment impinges upon their activities.

An organization in a changing environment and operating at less than satisfactory efficiency (as determined by those members who set

standards and objectives) will make changes to achieve these standards and objectives Members of an organization have a desired image of what the organization should be If the actual organization does not approximate the wished-for image, internal tensions begin to push for change Thus, an organization that seems to an outsider to be productive and whose personnel seem to enjoy high morale may, nonetheless, be under pressure to improve because the members set extremely high standards for the organization Last year's profit picture was good, as good as any in the industry, but if we are going to be the leaders, we will have to do even better

When an organization undertakes a change in procedure because of internal or external pressures to do better, it must do three things (1) orient itself to data, (2) evaluate the data and the suggested changes in goals, standards, and procedures, and (3) control the behavior of its members and allocate its material resources in ways that facilitate efficient, adequate adaptation to the new procedure

Take the case of the buyers' rebellion at Information Systems The organization wished to increase efficiency within the system and also to increase profits The old method of subcontracting was inefficient and resulted in loss of the price advantage stemming from competitive bids To control the external environment (get truly competitive bids), the organization established a new group of buyers with the specialized function of placing the orders The hope was that relieving the engineers of the responsibility for subcontracting would free them to concentrate on research and product development When the buyers resigned, the organization faced a drastic need for a change in procedure

The first step was the meeting to talk it over in order to discover the facts in the case, the data Those responsible for drafting new proposals and taking action to remedy malfunctions needed to know if the engineers were, in fact, still getting specifications from their counterparts in the supplying companies They had to determine whether the morale problem in the procurement division was, in fact, caused by the acoustical properties of the area in which they worked or whether it stemmed from their feeling that they lacked status in relation to the engineers Were the offices more important as status symbols than as a necessary working environment? If they mistake the cause of the difficulty and have acoustical engineers test the noise level, they will not solve the problem

On the other hand, if the buyers really felt the need for clear statements of their status and definite directives giving them absolute authority to do the buying, the organization must turn its attention to such questions as, "What modifications of the offices would fill the buyers' status needs?" "Would directives from upper management, spelling out clearly the buyers' responsibility, aid in resolving the difficulty?" "What

effect would clarification of the buyers' role have on the engineers who now have a higher status within the organization?"

Should the organization decide that the big room must be subdivided into individual offices to solve the morale problem, the next step involves planning the changes Involved are requesting consultation from the buyers, clarifying the responsibility of the buyers and engineers, and taking remedial action to prevent discontent in the engineering section

We can think of the cycle of change within the organization as going through the following stages

1 Members who are involved obtain information, largely factual, to clarify the difference between the present situation and the desired situation, between what is and what the organization hopes will be
2 Members analyze and evaluate the information They try to discover the cause of their difficulties If the problem involves a deterioration of previously satisfactory performance, they search for the reasons for this deterioration If the problem is a self-imposed one resulting from raising standards above present performance, they examine the evidence that led to an arbitrary shift to higher standards
3 Members help make decisions through delegation or consultation in the light of the organization's resources and objectives For example, Information Systems may decide that they cannot afford to invest more resources in plant facilities, and thus they take other steps to satisfy the buyers' status requirements and assure that the bids are henceforth competitive
4 Members are consulted by management in guiding implementation of the decision Information Systems might inaugurate a series of group meetings to discuss the problem They might have the president personally assure the buyers of their authority and spell out clearly what is to be done if bids are not competitive and assure the buyers of upper management's support
5 Finally, management provides for periodic evaluation of the effects of the change on task and on human relations Information Systems might institute a cost analysis bookkeeper system that indicates each buyer's cost-per-unit performance as compared to previous years and as adjusted for changes in price level At regular intervals short summary reports of these data would be forwarded to upper management Morale could be assessed by questionnaire and interview techniques

ORIENTATION

People in an organization discover largely by observation the nature of their problems and the factors that contribute to creating a specific situation When someone looks clearly at the facts and pinpoints

the various elements, he can inform others in the organization and make definite statements of his findings The comments made about observations are *statements of fact* Factual statements comprise one of the most important sources of information for those who wish to clarify the difference between the present situation and the desired situation

The direct observations by members may be submitted to the organization in the form of reports The writers of such information may be available to testify to others in detail if necessary Statements of fact that are directly verifiable by several people are usually most reliable Some information about the external world comes into the organization secondhand That is, the witnesses who observe the facts are outside the organization and not available to testify Statements of fact that are indirectly verifiable may enter the organization's message-processing system by means of written reports, books, newspapers, magazines, letters, or spoken communication from sources who were not firsthand witnesses but who are reporting what the witnesses told them Secondhand evidence tends to be less reliable and is called *hearsay* in courts of law

When George Nelson testified that several vendors had been "hung up" in an airplane over Chicago, he was asserting a statement of fact that was hearsay When he reported that the meeting was finally held in the office of an engineer, he was reporting facts that he knew of his own knowledge, and several other people within Information Systems could testify to the truth or falsity of his statement

Once the source and receiver agree about the truth of statements of fact, whether these be of their own knowledge or based on the testimony of others, the quest for implications begins This leads to the second kind of statement that provides information statements of inference The members ask, "What do these agreed-upon facts mean?" When Harry Rider concluded from the fact that the meeting was held in the engineer's office that the organization was treating the buyers like lackeys, he made an inference The engineer might infer from the same statements of fact that he had gone out of his way to accommodate the buyer in a difficult situation for the good of all

To sum up, organizations orient themselves to problem situations by means of statements of fact and statements of inference Statements of fact can be made by a source only after observation (although others may repeat them as hearsay) Statements of fact describe only what the source observes Usually a limited number of statements of fact exhaust an observation Statements of inference can be made before, during, or after observation They can be made by anyone and always add interpretation and evaluation, they can attribute causes to or provide an explanation for the facts The individual's transformers play a more influential role as he moves from statements of fact to statements of inference Factual statements are more objective and inferences more subjective

In processing information, the people who are participating should discriminate between statements of fact and statements of inference In most cases, reasonable men will agree about the truth or falsity of statements of fact The question of how many teeth there are in the mouth of a horse can be answered by going straight to the horse's mouth Inferences are more open to disagreement

People who confuse inferences with statements of fact often cause communication problems They often refuse to listen They do not need to discuss the problem because they know all they need to know They are rigid and unwilling to compromise When their decisions result in difficulties because what they thought were statements of fact were really their own inferences about the facts, full of their own attitudes and prejudices, they become highly defensive "I had the facts, my reasoning was good, the decision was correct It must have been those subordinates who failed to carry through properly Why can't we get people we can depend on these days "

Disaster often results from confusing statements of fact with statements of inference For example, the French army thought World War II would be fought in the same fashion as World War I They treated the inference as a fact and refused to listen to Charles de Gaulle who published a book in the late 1920's warning of mechanized blitzkrieg as the warfare of the future The French cast their inferences in concrete and placed their faith in the Maginot Line

We do not suggest that leaders can put off making a decision until they have "all of the facts " Seldom does a person have the time or resources to get all the relevant information We do suggest that based upon the best information available the manager be prepared for contingencies and make alternative plans The Ford Motor Company calls these "Programmed Alternatives " A good football quarterback has such alternative strategies and so can change the play at the last moment by calling audible signals at the line of scrimmage A wise manager can follow the same procedure and be prepared to "call an audible" decision that is a carefully planned alternative We feel that the willingness to evaluate data and make revisions, in short, *flexibility,* is a key characteristic for the managers of the modern organization Without flexibility the organization cannot adapt to the rapidly changing cultural and economic environment

When one is in the process of examining information to discover the nature of the facts, he ought to examine the plausibility, probability, and internal consistency of the statements However, busy people cannot always check and recheck observations Quite often they must take the testimony of others on faith The reputation of the source has a bearing on whether statements of fact are accepted or not

We tend to believe some people more readily because of their

past truthfulness The credibility of individuals has a counterpart in the credibility associated with organization and position Thus, although the receiver(s) may not know the plant manager personally, if he makes a statement it will have a different impact than if an outsider or a low status person makes the statement, simply because it came from a high status position within the company We may present the differences among source-message relationship schematically as follows

Source	*Consistency of statements with established fact*
A Known to be reliable	I Probably completely consistent
B Known to be fairly reliable	II Probably somewhat consistent
C Unknown	III Unknown
D Known to be slightly reliable	IV Probably somewhat inconsistent
E Known unreliable	V Probably inconsistent with established fact

Of course, important statements of fact should be checked in every way Chapter 12 supplies several techniques for doing this The reliability of the witness, the reports of other independent sources, the internal consistency of the reports, all may need to be ascertained if the receiver has the time and resources to do so Sometimes a decision must be made rapidly and the individual with the authority and responsibility has to accept alleged facts *on the basis of the reliability of the sources*

If one is realistic about the workings of an organization, he will not expect to avoid the communication breakdowns stemming from misunderstanding, disagreement, and misinformation He can, however, do a great deal to dissipate their destructive potential by consciously building feedback into his communication situations, by distinguishing between disruptive and productive disagreements, by consciously examining his self- and public images, and by discriminating between statements of fact and of inference

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Listening to the Spoken Word

CHAPTER 10

In the 1950's Purdue University and the University of Kansas conducted surveys of the communication problems in business and industry Their findings clearly revealed how decidedly the American business world had come to rely upon oral communication, but they also revealed that during at least the early part of that decade our business leaders felt that the major responsibility for clear communication rests upon the speaker—the *conveyor* of the information Perhaps this was a normal point of view It often seems reasonable to assume that if the message is clearly articulated, any person of normal intelligence ought to be able to assimilate it Even speech teachers have been known to be guilty of saying to a student "Mr Wilson, when you stand before an audience, 100 per cent of the responsibility for communication rests upon your shoulders Compel your audience to hear you and to consider your proposition" Today many of us would like to retract such past admonitions

The judgments reported by our business leaders on ten questions raised in the Purdue and Kansas surveys are worth a quick review, for they have caused many educators to reevaluate their procedures

QUESTION 1 If you wanted to get across some very important policy to your management personnel you might use some of the following

methods (1) explain the policy in an interoffice memo, (2) explain the policy on the telephone or inter com, (3) call a meeting of management personnel and explain orally, (4) announce policy in a management bulletin, (5) hold personal interviews with key personnel Which two of these methods would you consider most likely to get the best results?

Both surveys showed a great preponderance of favor for the third and fifth of the five options suggested above—both are speech-communication

QUESTION 2 Do you believe there is a relationship between communication and employee productivity?

Over 99 per cent of those responding in the Kansas survey and 96 per cent of those responding in the Purdue survey believed a "definite relationship" exists between communication and employee productivity

QUESTION 3 In your company do you consider oral communication, as compared with written communication, to be more important, equally important, or less important?

Forty-two per cent of the executives considered oral to be more important than written communication Slightly more than 8 per cent considered written to be more important than oral communication The remaining 50 per cent rated them as equally important

QUESTION 4 Do you feel that there is a relationship between "breakdowns" in communication between management and employees, and labor disputes and strikes?

Seventy-four per cent (79 per cent in the Purdue study) felt there was a "definite relationship," whereas less than 4 per cent (6 per cent in the Purdue study) believed there was no relationship

QUESTION 5 What factors are the most important CAUSES of breakdowns in business and industrial communication? (Ten possible causes were listed)

Both surveys found that "there are many causes of communication breakdowns rather than any single cause"

QUESTION 6 (This question related basically to how one acquires communicative ability)

As might be expected, a consensus was that greater communicative ability can be developed through training and experience

QUESTION 7 Do you believe that training methods of communication should be provided for management personnel?

Over 95 per cent of the respondents (100 per cent in the Purdue

study) felt that communication training should be provided for management personnel

QUESTION 8 At what levels should communication training be provided for management personnel?

The respondents seem to believe that middle management and supervisors are most in need of communication training (although it may be safe to say that all levels could benefit) It must be remembered that as top executives in local divisions and plants our respondents probably think of themselves as top management—and even then, 68 felt that training should be provided for top management

QUESTION 9 As far as oral communication is concerned, how much do the authority of the communicator's position and the personal regard that listeners have for the communicator affect the reception of a person's ideas?

Over 97 per cent of the executives (100 per cent in the Purdue study) felt that the authority of the communicator's position had more than a "little" effect on the reception of a person's ideas Nearly 98 per cent of the executives (identical with the Purdue study) believe that the personal regard that listeners have for the communicator has more than a "little" effect on the reception of his ideas

QUESTION 10 To what extent is the effectiveness of management personnel dependent upon ability in oral communication?

The great majority of executives who answered this question indicated that the effectiveness of management personnel is vitally dependent upon their ability in oral communication

Studies of the kind reported above are fairly well summarized in a statement by Charles B Wade, Jr, personnel manager and director of the R J Reynolds Tobacco Company In the article "It's Good Business to Explain Your Business" (published by the U S Chamber of Commerce), he declared "The gap between what owners and operators of American business know and what they effectively tell the mass of their employees is the most vulnerable spot in our economic system today"

INADEQUATE TRAINING FOR EFFECTIVE SPEECH

Were the schools of America ready by mid-century for industry's turn toward a reliance upon oral communication? They were not Al-

though the advantages of face-to-face communication were apparent enough to educators as well as to industrialists, there was a paucity of speech training in the colleges and almost no formal speech training in the secondary schools

Ratios of Usage

Academically we should have been better prepared for change Studies at the University of Iowa and elsewhere had indicated that the ratio between oral communication (speaking and listening) and visual communication (writing and reading) was running as high as 50 to 1 for blue-collar workers, and always as high as 3 to 1 for white-collar workers, even if their jobs are chiefly clerical

Dr Paul Rankin of Ohio State University, determined to find out what proportion of our waking day we spend communicating with each other, made a deeply significant study He enlisted the help of 65 white-collar workers, with each individual promising to keep a careful log on all his waking, daytime activities, at 15-minute intervals, for two months Rankin collected all these data, tabulated, and published them Immediately they were republished in a score of professional journals

Here is what he found 70 per cent of our waking day is spent in communication Seven out of every ten minutes that you and I are awake, we are communicating Rankin broke this down among its component parts and found that we spend 9 per cent of that time in writing, 16 per cent in reading, 30 per cent in talking, 45 per cent in listening In view of this preponderant use of oral language, it is truly astonishing that past educational emphasis in America has been almost exclusively upon reading and writing

Our Upside-Down Schools

Quantitatively speaking, America had built her school system exactly upside down If a youngster has continued his education through college, every year for 16 years his teachers have tried to teach him what a sentence is Then sometimes we handed the young man a four-year degree without knowing for certain that he really knew the nature of a sentence We poured countless tax dollars and hours of teacher energy into the refining skills appropriate for the least used channel of communication, writing

Reading got, and still gets, a pretty good investment Standard

practice in America is to have eight grades of reading training For some hard to understand reason we stop teaching reading at the end of the eighth year Any further gains made are on an individual basis only

Quantitatively, speech is more significant Thirty per cent of our time is devoted to it Yet we will still hunt a long time before we find a single required course in speech in the typical high school curriculum In a good school, there will be an all-school play put on once or twice a year In a topnotch school, there will be a debate team with a couple of lawyers' sons on it There may be an all-school orator or extempore speaker, and that is all Speech training in America is often an extracurricular activity, a peripheral function without much academic respectability The truth is that most of our speech training is still provided by Dale Carnegie and his affiliates in night classes at a tuition charge of about $150 per individual

Today, academic training in speech is definitely on the increase Outside pressures have demanded it be given more attention in our schools along with greater reliance upon face-to face communication in everyday life But inevitably, when the ratios of usage of oral and written communication became widely published, public attention began to turn to the counterpart of speech—listening In every study made and reported, listening was shown to be, quantitatively at least, the most important of the four basic communicative processes

A SPOTLIGHT THROWN ON LISTENING

In 1950 an exhaustive research completed and published a year earlier excited a good deal of attention The study revealed that except for one college none of our American schools was teaching courses labeled "listening" It found that whereas more than 3,000 scientific studies on reading improvement had been published, only 14 bearing on listening comprehension had appeared Although our schools were concerned with helping students to be logical, lucid, and clear, very little was being done to help them to listen more skillfully Then the significance of two related pieces of research came into focus and served to start an educational reform

An impressive study at Columbia University by Dr Harry Goldstein had drawn this general conclusion

> In our society, reading and listening constitute the basic tools of learning as well as the prime media of social intercourse In the fulfillment of these roles, the importance of reading has never been questioned Recently listening is receiving increased attention

Shortly after, Richard Hubbell concluded on the basis of his studies in the mass media of communication that 98 per cent of all that we learn in our lifetimes we learn either through our eyes or through our ears His declaration suddenly threw a spotlight upon a long neglected organ, the ear But most importantly, the reports of Hubbell and Goldstein created a new and intense interest in the earlier study done by Dr Paul Rankin His earlier report now found republication in scores of magazines and professional journals, and starting about 1950 a period of intense educational interest in listening training was launched

Most of our notable universities started to teach listening—and under that label More importantly, they initiated graduate-level research programs in the area In a single decade alone 125 Ph D degrees were granted for research done in the field of listening comprehension Moreover, the Curriculum Commission of the National Council of Teachers of English published two volumes that revealed the concern of persons in elementary and secondary education with the teaching of listening Considerable space was devoted to basic learning skills, and both volumes encouraged the schools of America to institute listening training at every grade level

Recently published language art textbooks almost without exception include chapters devoted to this learning medium Their writers tend to agree, essentially, on five things that most of us are poor listeners, that with training we could easily improve our performance, that schools definitely should provide such training, that to be an effective listener one must always be active and dynamic, and that the effective listener is sure to be richly rewarded

Influence of False Assumptions

In view of the widespread significance accorded to listening training since 1950, it is difficult to understand its neglect in our public schools prior to that date The answer seems to be that five unfounded—but widely held—assumptions have been largely responsible Those five assumptions, and some of the evidence now suggesting how badly we have been misled by them, are worth our attention.

ASSUMPTION 1 *Listening ability is largely a matter of intelligence* There is, of course, a positive correlation between listening ability and intelligence For that matter, our intelligence to a degree limits and controls everything we do or think. But the relationship between these two attributes is not nearly as close as many have assumed. For generations it has been widely accepted that listening ability and intelligence are almost identical The World Book Company has reported very careful

comparative measures of these two attributes, perhaps the best yet available Their studies show an average correlation of only 36 when a group-type intelligence test is used With perhaps the best intelligence test available today, the Wechsler-Bellevue, the correlation reported 55 when the language factor was uncontrolled, but only 22 when the language factor was controlled

ASSUMPTION 2 *Listening ability is closely related to hearing acuity* A rather vaguely held notion that hearing acuity significantly controls listening ability has led us astray What could be done for the defective other than to send him to an otologist? That this assumption is unfounded is evident when one discovers that only from 3 per cent to 6 percent of the nation's school population suffers from hearing defects severe enough to impair learning in a classroom situation

ASSUMPTION 3 *Daily practice eliminates the need for training* The feeling that we all get enough practice in listening outside the school room and need no formal training inside it has been the third assumption to retard progress The truth is that unless we are carefully guided we apparently tend to practice, develop, and reinforce *faults* rather than skills The falsity of Assumption 3 is shown by many recent studies A carefully done but unpublished study in the Nashville public schools showed that variation in listening comprehension among students in any single grade is as great as variation in reading comprehension The first conclusion drawn at the end of the Nashville study was that "Developing ability in listening is a curriculum problem"

ASSUMPTION 4 *To learn to listen, we need only to learn how to read* The falsity of this assumption should be apparent to almost anyone acquainted with educational research Such research shows, in general, that the effective way to develop any skill is to provide direct training designed to improve that skill It has been well summarized in a professional volume called the *English Language Arts,* which declares "Good listening habits are taught, not caught" The best way to improve our listening is to receive direct training in that skill

ASSUMPTION 5 *Learning to read is more important than learning to listen* The rather vague impression that human behavior is more influenced by what is read than by what is heard may well be the most significant of the five assumptions that have combined to retard listening training This assumption is as unfounded and false as the other four Actually, what we hear influences us far more than does what we read For instance, as part of an effort to discover why people vote as they do in presidential elections, the Survey Research Center of the University of Michigan looked for the source of most political information The re-

search workers found that 58 per cent came from radio and television Only 27 per cent came from newspapers and magazines Moreover, a dozen reported surveys of the confidence the American public has in the mass media which serve us has resulted each time in the public's reporting that it has least confidence in the truth and accuracy of newspapers and periodicals, much greater confidence in radio and television

At this time the best judgment that we can make of the five foregoing assumptions is that they are unfounded As their falsity becomes more widely recognized, listening education will expand Fortunately, professional literature is today supplying abundant reports of research leading to the conviction that there are factors other than intelligence which control listening performance, that most of these factors far outweigh hearing acuity, that this assimilative skill can be taught, that to be taught well it must be taught directly, and that in the years ahead it seems certain that we shall be influenced much more by the things we hear than by the things we read

In Business and Industry—A Different Picture

Although listening training in our schools has been somewhat slow in coming, exactly the reverse has been true among our business enterprises and among our governmental agencies Since 1950 scores of industries have instituted their own listening-training programs Thirty-four departments of the Federal Government have followed suit, and every branch of the military services now has some listening training for at least some of their officer personnel Consider what has happened in just the recent past

In 1967 sectional meetings were devoted to listening training at more than 100 management conferences Scores of national conventions included a general session devoted to the topic Nearly 100 industrial firms established their own listening-training programs designed to improve employee performance, still a larger number are administering standard tests of listening comprehension to workers whose tasks are primarily communicative in character Extension classes in "Efficient Listening" are being widely taught, and an increasing number of thought-provoking articles devoted to the skill are appearing in business journals and bulletins

Statements stressing the importance of careful listening to efficient business operation are numerous John J McGrath, manager of training for Macy's department stores in the New York area, points out one aspect of the matter in these words.

> One big difficulty with new inexperienced sales clerks is that they don't listen Here's what an inexperienced clerk often does a customer steps to the counter and says, "I want that blouse on display there I'd like size 14 with short sleeves" She rushes away and brings back a blouse, size 14, but with long sleeves The customer again explains, "Short sleeves" Back goes the clerk, and again the customer waits In a store the size of ours, such incidents can run into money There's useless work for the clerk, unnecessary handling of merchandise and, most important, possibly an irritated customer That's why in our training we stress, "Listen before you act"

Dr Earl Planty, executive counselor for the pharmaceutical firm of Johnson and Johnson at New Brunswick, New Jersey, stresses a second aspect as follows "By far the most effective method by which executives can tap ideas of subordinates is sympathetic listening in the many day-to-day informal contacts within and outside the work place There is no full-blown system that will do the job in an easier manner Nothing can equal an executive's willingness to hear"

Something of a summary of the thinking of business leaders is contained in the words of Frank E Fischer, director of the Communications Course of the American Management Association He tersely declares, "Efficient listening is of such critical importance to industry, that as research and methodology improve I feel that training departments will have to offer courses in this field"

Once our business leaders became sensitive to the swing to oral-aural communication, their concern with the listening factor was both quick and deep There can be no denying its impact upon management principles and practices

A New Concept of Communication

Since 1950 business executives have seemed peculiarly receptive to a revised concept of communication For decades the word had conveyed one meaning only—the *distribution* of information But in the postwar years increasing numbers of thoughtful businessmen began to think of communication as a *two-way process*

True, management still consisted of getting other people to do things that had to be done But simply telling others what to do was no longer good enough Successful managers were those who listened to their employees as frequently as they instructed them Even if a manager could do nothing immediately in response to an employee's complaints or wishes, he found it highly profitable to learn as directly as possible what his workers were talking and thinking about Inasmuch as most employee

reactions were oral in character, the time was ripe for new attention to be paid to the *assimilative* skill of listening

Another factor speeding the development of training was a growing awareness of the terrific costs of bad listening In our increasingly intricate and complex business machinery, the potential damage caused by even one poor listener is very great Too many of our supervisory personnel were still much better at "telling 'em" than at "listening to 'em," and this weakness became more apparent as the complexity of our economy increased

For example, the managers of a large East Coast industrial firm came to work on a Monday morning to find the plant surrounded by pickets It was a complete surprise Labor negotiations had been underway, but the top management had no idea a strike was impending, in fact, it was the first strike in the plant's history What had happened?

It developed that the firm's director of labor relations had warned a member of the top management that a strike was possible and had recommended action to prevent it But nothing was done The firm lost five days of valuable production before a settlement was reached Later, the management member who had been warned said his immediate reaction to the recommendation of the director of labor relations had been that "a strike couldn't happen here!" With that thought in mind, he had ceased to listen and learn the seriousness of the warning Had Henry Wolfson listened more carefully to Bill Johnson Informations Systems top management would not have been caught unaware by the buyers' rebellion

Workers Who Miss Directions

Of course workers who miss directions can cause inestimable harm, too When a Long Island, New York, plant hired a number of new employees a few years ago to work over a forge used for heating tool steel, a meeting was held to instruct them verbally in the use of grappling irons The men used the irons, with removable wooden handles, to hold the steel in the forge When a man finished with a hot grappling iron, the instructor said he was to hang it on the wall to the right of the forge As the irons cooled, they were to be moved to the left wall. And when an employee needed a grappling iron, he of course would take it from the left wall

Shortly after the meeting, an employee hung a hot grappling iron on the wrong wall Another man walked into the room, reached up and grabbed the hot iron The burns caused by the hot metal impaired the man's ability to work for the remainder of his life At a hearing after

the accident, the man who had placed the iron on the wrong wall stated that he had not heard anybody sav hot irons were to be hung to the right of the forge However, other employees testified he was present when the instructions were given

No Justification for Bad Performance

Such instances could be multiplied almost without end Actually, it may well have been fortunate that industry has become very sensitive to how much damage a poor listener can do This knowledge has led to considerable research comparing the efficiency of the eye and the ear The result has led to the firm conclusion that there is no real justification for bad listening In an organic and physiological sense the ear seems to outperform the eye on every basis of comparison

Comparative facts about the eye and the ear cannot help but increase our respect for the latter First, assimilation through the ear is multidirectional or epicritical, sound stimuli originating from any point on the surface of a sphere of which the ear is the center can be detected and interpreted Accurate assimilation through the eye, by contrast, is only possible when the perceived object is placed in focus A single line represents the areas from which signals can be received Second, the ear is more sensitive than the eye, requiring a smaller amount of energy for activation (in microwatts per square centimeter, 10^{-9} for the ear and 10^{-8} for the eye) Third, reaction time for sound is faster than for light, the figures being 153 and 174 milliseconds, respectively Fourth, the ear appears to be much more durable than the eye, with a much greater capacity for continuous use About two-thirds of all Americans, for instance, wear glasses or ought to wear them, but only about 6 to 8 per cent have hearing defects that handicap us in a learning situation Almost every effective manager now recognizes that imaginative use of the communication process is our best index to corporate viability Certainly in the years ahead the significance of listening education will increase as our respect for this medium of learning—its significance and its economy—increases

TWO BASIC BENEFITS FROM SPECIALIZED LISTENING

Continuous, purposeful listening in face-to-face communication can help us solve two basic problems in human relations Their identity and nature deserve careful attention

Therapeutic Listening

The primary function of listening is to secure information, but it is only one function of many. Another enormously important reason for listening is that of providing an aroused speaker with significant emotional relief.

Nondirective counseling, now widely practiced, depends upon persons trained to listen quietly and objectively. The counselor is instructed never to argue with a client, rather, his central function is to provide a sympathetic and open ear—an ear that serves as a kind of sounding board enabling the speaker to judge more accurately the seriousness of his own problems. At times, the client merely needs human companionship, in addition, he may urgently need to rid himself of anger or some other pent-up emotion, or finally, he may need to modify some idea or project he has in mind—to understand more clearly his own previous thoughts. When he voices his thoughts to an attentive hearer, his ends are often realized.

Actually, therapeutic listening is by no means a new idea. Some 4,400 years ago, Ptahhopet, one of the pharaohs, instructed the viziers and officers of his staff as follows: "An official who must listen to the pleas of clients should listen patiently and without rancor, because a petitioner wants attention to what he says even more than the accomplishing of that for which he came." These words were the first suggestion, perhaps, of how to attain those healing effects now sought by so many of our current experts in human relations. Today, nondirective counseling—which essentially means nonevaluative listening—is common practice in both hiring and exit interviews, in handling workers' grievances, and even in collective bargaining sessions.

The importance of therapeutic listening has been clearly pointed out by two experts in the field. Dr. Elton Mayo declares that "One friend, one person who is truly understanding, who takes the trouble to listen to us as we consider our problem, can change our whole outlook on the world." Dr. Florence Hollis, professor of Social Work at Columbia University, puts it this way: "When a person knows that he has a good listener to talk to, he'll share his thoughts more fully, which, in turn, makes it easier for the caseworker to help him with his problems. And, moreover, as he talks, the person needing help often finds a good solution to his problems himself."

If we are to have listeners when we ourselves need them, we must learn to be kindly and attentive when someone wishes to talk to us. The whole matter seems a rather clear-cut application of the Golden Rule.

Listening and speaking are the two things men do most frequently and constantly throughout their lives Because we are basically and inherently social beings, our problems and concerns are inextricably involved with those of our associates For these reasons the following admonitions may well be worth observing by those of us engaged in counseling or human-relations activities

Be quick to spot a troubled associate Whenever we sense that someone is about to "blow his stack," our first thought should be to provide him with an open and sympathetic ear

Be attentive If a violent tirade is launched, our best contribution will be to let it flow uninterrupted until it is exhausted If a pause occurs en route, certain assists by the listener can be made

Employ three kinds of reactions only Three listener responses may at various times prove helpful during nondirective counseling First, the counselor may employ what someone has called a series of "eloquent and encouraging grunts"—"Hum," "Uh-huh," "Oh," or "I see " Second, if the speaker pauses momentarily, the counselor may remain silent but continue to nod his head thoughtfully until speech starts again Third, if the speaker becomes wild and unreasonable in his declarations, the counselor may restate what the speaker has just said, putting it in question form Examples of such restatements might be "You really think, then, that all middlemen are dishonest?" or, "You believe your mother-in-law is deliberately trying to ruin your marriage?"

Never probe for additional facts There is a distinct difference between willingness to listen and curious inquisitiveness designed to elicit extra information The latter must be avoided

Never evaluate what has been said The counselor must refrain completely from passing any moral judgments upon what he has heard In no case should he give the speaker any advice, even if advice is requested

Never lose faith in the ability of the speaker to solve his own problem The whole key to nondirective counseling is to maintain faith that each man is a rational being who will eventually work out his own salvation Dr Carl Rogers, famous psychologist, declares that such faith is invariably justified As he puts it

> When the individual's negative feelings have been quite fully expressed, they are followed by the faint and tentative expressions of the positive impulses which make for growth There is nothing which gives more surprise to the beginner than to find that this positive expression is one of the most certain and predictable aspects of the whole process The more violent and deep the negative expressions, the more certain

are the positive expressions of love, of fundamental self-respect, of the desire to be mature

Throughout nondirective counseling the listener must continue to think of his client as he will be when his problem has been solved and all has returned to normal In return for his kindness and sympathy, and for his restraint in keeping out of the center of the stage, the counselor is often himself rewarded He may experience as much relief from tension and worry as does the speaker

Rapid Listening

Research workers are continually polling various groups of people to determine what they deem to be their chief problems Among white-collar folk the most consistently reported problem reported is "inability to concentrate" At one large midwestern university 82 per cent of the students queried reported "inability to concentrate" as their central problem in school These students did not get much help from educational literature "How-to-study" books seem much given to offering advice, most of it rather silly A typical list of admonitions offered would include "Be interested," "Suppress distractions by sheer will power," "Pay attention," "Keep as quiet as possible," "Plunge right in," "Be dynamic, be constructive, be concerned" One might as well be advised to "Be intelligent!"

To advise someone to "pay attention" does not make much sense We are attentive to *something* during all our waking hours, it is impossible to be anything else True, we may be inattentive to the topic under discussion while we consider a growling stomach or a beautiful blonde, but always we are attentive to one item or another in our environment In one sense living itself is learning As long as we are alive and awake we are almost certain to be learning something, perhaps at a very slow pace and very inefficiently The important thing is *what* we are learning; at what rate, when, where, and how much of it we are going to absorb

Giving sustained attention to a lengthy speech is particularly difficult Such discourse demands a focusing of the listener's higher mental faculties for prolonged intervals Moreover, much of our learning is in carefully organized sessions in school or on the job where inattention becomes very costly Grade-school teachers, for instance, have been found to talk 57 per cent of all class periods (They themselves estimate that they talk only 25 per cent of class time) High school teachers talk 68 per cent, and college professors 80 per cent, of all class periods White-collar workers and management personnel in industry are in face-to-face communication nearly 40 per cent of every eight-hour workday, although not all of this takes place in organized group situations One is forced to wonder

what is going on at the other end of all this talk. How can our listening efficiency be most quickly improved?

Rapid listening is our best answer. The faster we listen, the better we listen. If speech could be produced articulately and normally at 400 or 500 words per minute, many of our problems in listening to sustained discourse would disappear. Just as the rapid reader comprehends more than the slow reader, listening comprehension increases with increased speech speed. A whole new technology of "compressed speech" is now rapidly developing and has already been employed at a number of professional meetings. Major concurrent sessions at these conventions are recorded, "compressed," and played back at "listening posts." Registrants are thus able to hear program elements otherwise missed in a fraction of the time required in the original, live delivery. The concept of rapid listening and techniques for capitalizing upon it will be discussed at length in the subsequent chapter.

Implications for All of Us

As the current war on paper signals the end of the Gutenberg era, it is a matter of wonder that we waited so long to launch the struggle. Perhaps we were merely awaiting the arrival of the tape recorder and the electronic computer; perhaps too many generations had passed in which no one felt really safe until the decision was "put into writing"; but most probably we hesitated because we feared the bad listening which all too often disrupted the process of oral communication. Today those fears are being dissipated. Listening can be taught, and it can be learned. It is a tool. True, it cannot be purchased by weight or quantity at some department store. Nor can it be come by without an investment of time and considerable energy. But every day this tool, referring as it does to what we hear, understand, and remember, takes on more definite meaning.

Not that printed documents will no longer be produced, for we shall probably always need them. But our drifting away from a visually oriented culture toward an oral-aural one can no longer be doubted. David Sarnoff, chairman of the board of the Radio Corporation of America, sharpens our vision of further changes to come in these words:

> By the mid-70's and possibly sooner, high power broadcast satellites will beam television programs and motion pictures directly to home receivers anywhere in the world. In the not too distant future, information will flow in almost limitless quantities on laser light beams through hollow pipes extending from city to city. Our present instruments—telephone, radio, television, still and motion pictures, record and tape player—will merge into a comprehensive system which will become the communications center of the home.

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Getting the Message

CHAPTER 11

Some 2,000 aural messages are slanted toward each one of us every normal waking day Each message is reasonably complete and reasonably discrete Some are informative, some persuasive, and some are entertaining There seems to be no particularly good reason why we should not receive all 2,000 of those being sent Yet on the average each of us receives and assimilates but 500 of the 2,000 messages conveyed in our direction Why is this true? And what would it mean to us if we could receive a much greater number?

Listening is the attachment of meaning to selected aural messages and symbols The meaning, of course, comes from us We can listen only with our own experience Why the vast majority of us tend to screen out and give meaning to but 500 messages per day is not entirely clear Actually, the 2,000 discrete messages sent us are supplemented by countless thousands of additional aural signals which without careful analysis can provide us with but tiny bits of knowledge These additional signals carry only fragments of messages, most of which go entirely ignored

Perhaps the reason we assimilate and in some fashion respond to but 500 messages a day is because we have for generations been living in an essentially visually oriented world If we missed an aural message, so what? Eventually, some official written notification of it might reach our

attention Or perhaps the reason for our limited message reception lies in the very multiplicity of messages being broadcast One cannot possibly receive and assimilate all of them, no doubt our nervous systems are less disturbed because of the screening-out process

What would happen to us if we were to increase significantly the number of daily messages received? Obviously we would learn more, know more, and have markedly increased influence upon others Knowledge is power Our industrial, political, and educational leaders certainly receive and assimilate more messages than does the typical citizen As our culture becomes increasingly ear-oriented, we can look forward to a generation that may be able to double the number of complete and fragmented messages being assimilated by ordinary citizens

BAD LISTENING PERVADES OUR CULTURE

If we are to make steady and certain progress toward effective listening, it is important to recognize the dimensions of the problem we face and its underlying causes

Bad Listening in School

In school, bad listening is an enormous problem One of the first to reveal it was Professor Harry Jones of Columbia University Several years ago, one fall, he was placed in charge of 476 young people enrolled in the several sections of an elementary psychology course One day each week he gave the entire group a full-period lecture and then immediately tested their comprehension over what he had said He soon decided that he was not getting much of anything through to the brains of his freshmen

But he hit upon a novel idea for an experiment He persuaded 50 of his colleagues on the faculty at Columbia to cooperate with him Each professor represented a different area of study, and each promised to come in and give a ten-minute cutting of his own favorite lecture to Jones's freshman population Furthermore, each professor submitted his ten-minute excerpt to Jones ahead of time, who painstakingly built an objective test over its content

The experiment proceeded Professor No 1 walked in and gave his ten-minute talk The group was tested and he disappeared No 2 followed After several days the group had heard 50 little lectures and had been tested 50 times

Jones found that on the average his freshmen could answer only

half the items in the quizzes Two months later Jones reassembled his 476 students and gave them the whole battery of 50 tests a second time This time they were able to answer correctly only 25 per cent of the items Jones concluded that university freshmen appear to operate at a 25 per cent level of efficiency when they listen to a ten-minute talk

The present writer did not believe it could possibly be that bad He repeated the experiment at the University of Minnesota, following the format Jones had used, with only one deviation Retesting took place at the end of two weeks instead of two months Results were the same Minnesota students knew half the answers immediately after the lecture, one-fourth of the answers after two weeks had gone by

How happy should we be with such performance? One businessman recently declared, "I have to run my assembly line at 98 per cent efficiency or I'm broke I can allow 2 per cent for scrap in my shop, the profit margin is so narrow in my field" That same executive, proud of 98 per cent efficiency on the assembly line, may operate at a 25 per cent level of efficiency when he listens

Bad Listening in Court

Bad listening in our courts is a most distressing problem Recently one of the authors received a letter from a New England lawyer raising a peculiar question He said he had just completed a civil case in Boston at the end of which the judge had spent six hours instructing the jury on the law that they were to use in rendering their decision He asked "What proportion of that six-hour discourse will the jurors understand and use?" In honesty, the author had to reply that probably the answer was zero, that hardly ever could it be over 5 per cent of so long a speech A more important question arises What kind of justice do we get in the American court?

We could find out All we would have to do would be to make transcriptions of a dozen judges' instructions to a dozen juries, build a set of objective test questions over the content, administer it to a university population, and come up with an answer The result of such a study might well be the most controversial article ever published in a national magazine

Bad Listening in Selling

Occasionally one hears a bitter customer complain, "I've never yet met a salesman who didn't talk too much They talk themselves into a sale and right out again, without knowing what happened" How often

does one meet a salesman who listens carefully enough? Most salesmen seem to be persons of enormous energy who can hardly wait to start their sales pitch but who neglect the collection of continuous feedback

A few years ago a national magazine published an article about champion salesmen The 15 greatest salesmen in America had been given awards by a national organization for having sold larger dollar volumes of their respective goods than had their millions of competitors throughout the economy In the magazine story each salesman reported what the factors were that had helped him build his record For every two factors that related to effective speaking, these champions reported three other factors that related to effective listening!

The great, the *champion* salesman, is not the champion speaker at all He is the champion listener He listens intently to each prospect in order to discover the man's true needs and to identify the obstacles that must be overcome before a sale can be made Actually, the most effective selling in the world today seems to be the low-pressure business of tuning in a customer and listening carefully By so doing the salesman builds inside the customer a steady, firm, and growing obligation to hear out the salesman a little later on

Yes, the day of the "wheeler and dealer" in selling is passing The new approach is built around one central question *How can a person sell either himself or his product if he does not know what the prospective buyer needs?*

A NEW KIND OF MARKET RESEARCH

Traditionally the business world has depended upon *market* research Market research provides essential statistics on how many people bought which brands at what prices But "markets are people," and the more insight we have into people the better

If we are to understand people better, we must learn to listen to them. One of the authors recently sought the reactions of 100 housewives to the retail sales persons in stores from which the ladies did the bulk of their buying The study was unstructured, and the homemakers cooperating in it freely wrote and spoke their minds A content analysis of the complaints and satisfactions of these 100 consumers resulted in the following lists of those items most frequently mentioned

FIVE ATTRIBUTES MOST LIKED

1 The salesman recognizes that I have a problem and seems eager and willing to help me, even if he cannot Questions he asks demonstrate an understanding of my problem

2 He remembers me and calls me by name
3 He lets me take my time in making a decision There is no attempt whatever at pressure
4 The salesman shows me the same article in different price ranges, with accurate comparisons of quality, and occasionally recommends the lower priced articles
5 The salesman is pleasant and thanks me for my interest, even though I may have bought nothing

FIVE ATTRIBUTES MOST IRRITATING

1 Condescension Telling me what I want or ought to have! "Nobody uses *that* kind anymore," he says (I am one shopper who does)
2 The salesman refuses "to hear me out" My problem either obviously bores him or prompts him to deliver a memorized, high-pressure sales talk
3 The salesman is determined to substitute another size or quality for what I want
4 The sales person is pleasant until I decide against his product or ask adjustment of a previous purchase Then he gets unpleasant
5 The salesman pretends to have a greater knowledge about his product than he really possesses

THE ROLE OF LISTENING IN SELLING

The central deduction to be drawn from this preliminary study is pretty obvious It is that the very essence of good salesmanship is the ability to listen Those who fail to recognize that fact are likely to be only transients in their chosen field

Bad Listening in the Field of Management

Most critical of all, perhaps, is the bad listening to be found in organizational management

A few years ago a young man went to a speech professor at a large state university and said that he would like to secure a Ph D degree in speech The professor replied "Well, your credentials look good enough, but instead of working on a Ph D in the speech area, I would like you to do it in the field of listening I have a project in mind Take a notebook, go to this firm in New Orleans and interview all the management people you can get in to see during one week Ask them these

questions " Then he gave the young man a list of questions he was to raise with each manager

A week later the young man returned His little notebook was full of testimony that he had acquired from these management personnel The gist of it was that they worked for a tremendous organization, that they had a great future, that they felt they had one of the finest communication systems ever devised in any business or industry

They said, "Our workers know what we are trying to do They understand our program We have the most loyal group of employees to be found anywhere The morale in our outfit is tremendous The future looks good "

"OK," said the speech professor "Put on a pair of overalls Go down to that same firm and see Joe Walker, head of the trucking department for that industry You are to work for him for one year Every day carry a notebook in your inside pocket, and whenever you hear the employees say anything about their management—write it down "

Twelve months later the student came back with a great stack of notebooks The professor spent several weeks poring over the testimony in them, and when he got through announced that it was the most vicious, malicious, denunciatory attack of one group upon another that he had ever laid eyes on in his life

Trying to find out what employees really knew of their firm's policies, procedures, and philosophy, he concluded that the workers understood less than 25 per cent of what their managers thought they understood

IS 25 PER CENT LISTENING EFFICIENCY TYPICAL?

One might doubt such a generalization if it were not constantly being verified One of the best such verifications comes from the Pidgeon Savage Lewis Corporation of Minneapolis, an advertising and communications firm This company recently made a very careful study of the communicative efficiency of 100 representative industrial managements In order to understand their figures, one should recognize that typically in these 100 industries there were five levels of management above the worker pool at the bottom Up at the top always was some kind of board of directors Right below, a vice-presidential level, then came the general supervisory level, the plant manager level, the foreman level, and then the manual workers at the bottom, sometimes unionized, sometimes not

Early in their study they found that one director talks very well with another director Sometimes the directors achieve 90 per cent efficiency in transmitting messages from one to the other Sometimes fore-

men do as well Horizontal or lateral communication with our own peers seems to be no great problem to us in our organizations But vertical communication downward reveals an entirely different picture If the chairman of the board calls in a vice-president and tells him something, on the average only 63 per cent of the message is assimilated by the latter

If the vice-president relays the same message to a general super visor, 56 per cent of it arrives If the supervisor gives it to a plant manager, 40 per cent arrives If the plant manager passes it along to a foreman, 30 per cent is received And if the foreman gives it to the squad of workers who are *his* responsibility, only 20 per cent of the original message will have passed down through five levels of authority to reach its ultimate receivers

Studies have dug deeper What kind of person is the employee who understands only 20 per cent of what his management hopefully believes he understands? The 20 per cent informed individual is usually negative-minded He believes that he is being exploited by the managers at the top who hog most of the profits and do not give him a proper share He may be inclined to commit theft in order to get even—and the easiest thing to steal is time One can check in late and pretend he got there early Or he can leave early and report he left late It is always easy to slow down at the desk, on the assembly line, or wherever one is working Some malcontents have gone even further and have stolen tools or equipment

COMMUNICATION EFFICIENCY AND SUCCESS OF BUSINESS

The reader must be wondering "How can companies stay in business? How can any firm operate with 20 per cent efficiency in communication?" The truth is, it cannot It has been proved that these conditions lead to bankruptcy Every year in America 4 per cent of our businesses go bankrupt A new firm has only a 40 per cent chance to survive the first year Every 25 years 90 per cent of all our businesses go bankrupt

It would be difficult indeed to prove that nine out of ten managements are headed for bankruptcy during the next 25 years because of bad communication But a recent Dun & Bradstreet study of the causes of business failures reported that over 90 per cent of such failures are directly traceable to bad management And what is management?

As we noted in Chapter 1, Lawrence Appley, the president of the American Management Association, defined it neatly "Management is simply the business of getting other people to do the things that must be done" If he is correct, communication must be the very heart and soul

of managing any enterprise How on earth can we get other people to do the things that must be done if we cannot communicate with them?

UPWARD COMMUNICATION

Communicative efficiency down through the levels of management is extremely poor But *upward* communication through the levels of management may be even more important It seems probable that downward communication is likely to improve significantly only when top management comes to a better understanding of the attitudes, the opinions, the ideas, and the suggestions of the people at the bottom of the whole structure

What kind of efficiency do we have when the levels of management report upward? A recent study made of 24 industrial plants revealed a very peculiar thing In the pilot stages of their study the researchers had identified ten distinct factors as being most important in the morale of any employee group They then asked the managers to rank the ten factors in the order of their importance in influencing the employee group The managers put the following factors in the bottom three ranks

8 Full appreciation of work done
9 Feeling "in on things"
10 Sympathetic help on personal problems

Then the researchers asked the hourly workers to rank the ten morale factors in the order in which as employees they were actually influenced by them The ranking was as follows

1 Full appreciation of work done
2 Feeling "in on things"
3 Sympathetic help on personal problems

It is almost incredible that management could guess exactly wrong, putting the three most important factors in the three least important spots, but this kind of evidence emerges again and again when objective studies are made of how well managements really understand the attitudes and opinions of their employee groups

Most forward-looking American companies have become deeply concerned about upward communication They have apparently accepted the premise that the efficiency of their operation is closely related to how well management understands its employee group The result is that these companies are making repeated efforts to discover the worries, problems, fears, and ideas of their hourly workers Many techniques have been tried in an attempt to establish a regular system of upward communication

The first attempt was for the boss to try to get acquainted with everyone Many a president took great pride in the fact that he knew

everybody on his payroll Many of them liked to spend half a day walking through the shop or plant, shaking hands with all the workers The system worked fairly well in the smaller companies But mergers were taking place everywhere, companies were growing in size So other systems were devised

We tried labor-management meetings in which labor was supposed to "speak out" We had elected representatives of labor meet with selected management people We tried hiring a chaplain as a special counselor, with all personnel encouraged to confer with him at any time We tried labor reporters for the house publication, suggestion and complaint boxes, father confessors, opinion and attitude surveys, and we found that even though each device carries certain elements of merit, in every case it has a built-in weakness

Their failing is that they *are* merely devices or techniques, they do not get at the heart of the problem, which is sympathetic listening by one man to another The point was underlined in a study by Loyola University researchers In this instance the professors spent 18 months trying to find out what the attributes of a good manager really are They finally came up with this generalization

> Of all the sources of information a manager has by which he can come to know and accurately size up the personalities of the people in his department, listening to the individual employee is the most important

The most stereotyped report they got from worker after worker who thought well of their superiors was this one "I like my boss He listens to me I can talk to him"

TEN PITFALLS CAUSE BAD LISTENING

Clearly, bad listening pervades all phases of our culture Is there anything we can do about it? Yes, if we understand and remove its causes

Ten great pitfalls always beset us when we try to listen They were first identified in a study by the present writer at the University of Minnesota several years ago It was based upon the 100 best and the 100 worst listeners that could be drawn from our freshman population They were two widely contrasting groups The 200 freshmen were subjected to about 20 different kinds of tests and measures Scores were obtained upon their reading, writing, speaking, and listening, their intelligence, mechanical aptitudes, math aptitudes, science aptitudes Each was put through six different kinds of personality inventories and each one filled out a long questionnaire and underwent a long interview with the author

After nine months of study into the differences between the good and the bad performers, the ten pitfalls causing bad listening became clear Subsequent studies in Colorado and Michigan corroborated their character and the damage they do

Pitfall 1 Disinterest

The first characteristic that separated the good performer from the bad was disinterest Many bad listeners tend to decide that the speaker's topic is dull as soon as the chairman announces it Often it seems unrelated to our central interests, distinctly less pleasant to think about than our golf game, our sports car, or our plans for a vacation

The first key to good listening is the three-letter word, *use* The good listener is a sifter, a screener, a winnower of the wheat from the chaff He is always trying to find something practical or worthwhile to store away in the back part of his brain and put to work for his own selfish benefit in the months to come

We should acknowledge the selfish character of it Whenever we hear sustained speech, we have every right to be selfish, to hunt for the worthwhile, and to store up these things for personal gain in the years ahead This was well put by G K Chesterton some 50 years ago when he said, "In all this world there is no such thing as an uninteresting subject There are only uninterested people"

Pitfall 2 Distracting Speaker Personality

The second bad-listening habit is to criticize the speaker's person or his delivery This gets to be a tension release for most bad listeners No sooner does the man start to talk than the bad listener says, "Look at that fellow, would you? Didn't anybody ever tell him to keep his hands out of his pockets when he is giving a speech? And his voice! Nobody could get anything from such a terrible speaker" Then the bad listener feels justified in going off on a mental tangent

Again the good listener starts at the same point but gets to a different conclusion When the man starts to talk he says, "Gee, this guy is inept He is perhaps as awkward and graceless a speaker as I have ever heard But he has information I need So I will concentrate on his content and forget his mannerisms"

An amazing thing happens Not many moments go by before the listener who is trying to get the message grows oblivious to all the delivery faults of the poor, fumbling speaker The point is this The mes-

sage is many times more important than the clothing in which it comes dressed As soon as we recognize this simple truth we are all on the way to becoming better listeners, because we then begin to assume at least half the obligation for completing each communication we hear

Pitfall 3 Verbal Battle

Many listeners are combative by nature A speaker seldom talks more than a minute or two before such listeners feel impelled to do verbal battle Their impulses are disastrous to effective listening The first desire may be to challenge the speaker on the spot, interrupting him to do so A second impulse may be to compose a loaded question to hurl at the speaker at the earliest opportunity Still a third may be to marshal a bit of evidence that contradicts something the speaker has just reported and to mentally build around it a whole rebuttal speech

Too many times at the end of a good speech such overstimulated listeners have leaped to their feet, hurled their questions at the speaker, or have made their great rebuttal efforts Usually they have found the speaker looking at them in complete astonishment, and saying, "But, sir Didn't you hear what I went on to say later, that so and so was also true?" The listener had not heard His listening efficiency had dropped to zero as he composed his critical commentary

Pitfall 4 Fact-Hunting

The fourth bad listening habit is to listen only for facts The 100 worst listeners were asked what they concentrated on when they listened Every one of them said, "We listen for the facts " The truth was that they got a few facts, garbled a shocking number, and completely lost the bulk of them

The 100 best listeners were also asked what they concentrated on when they listened Very timidly, 97 said, "Well, we try to get the main ideas out of it Usually, when a man is giving a speech, he is developing some kind of a generalization, a principle, or a concept We try to understand these central ideas as best we can " We pursued this facet of good listening Soon we became convinced that the good listener is always the idea listener He understands the central ideas fairly well and uses them to give sense and system to the whole discourse And after two days have passed he has more facts appended to his connecting threads than the spongers and catalogers of facts are able to retain Even if it is facts we want, the best way to get them is to get first the principle that limits and

controls them Then we have a chance to retain and make use of those facts

Pitfall 5 Paper Storage

Many people discharge their real or imagined obligation to a speaker by taking voluminous notes They carry the notes home, store them away, and perhaps never look at them again What nonsense! The *taking* of notes pays no dividends, it is the *later use* of the notes that may be of some value Actually, there is a negative correlation between the volume of notes taken and the quality of the listening performance

The 100 worst listeners were asked their method for note-taking To a man, they said immediately, "We make an outline, of course " They thought note-taking and outlining were synonymous! There is nothing wrong with outlining a speech, if the speaker is following an outlined pattern of organization himself, as perhaps he should be However, no more than half the talks we hear are going to be given by speakers carefully following a previously prepared outline One of the most frustrating things is to try to outline the unoutlinable Students who do this become deeply engrossed in symmetry They get the borders around the four sides beautifully spaced, the content nicely centered After each of their outline symbols they painfully inscribe a few words of meaningless jargon

Two months later, reviewing their collection in an attempt to prepare for the final examination, they spend almost the entire review period trying to figure out, "What was I thinking about when I wrote that in my notebook?" What a futile business

For half a century we have assumed that because big notebooks and good students travel together, the former must create the latter No such cause-and-effect relationship has ever been established However, it may well be the other way around Perhaps the voluminous note-taker and paper-storer is merely a victim of a very conventional and not very beneficial practice Certainly the contribution a man makes in this world is more dependent upon what he has in his head than upon what he has in his notebook

Pitfall 6 Half-Listening

A pitfall into which almost all of us tumble frequently is that of half-listening, giving the speaker partial attention The practice is ruinous to listening efficiency. There are only two possible outcomes We succeed in our faking of attention, or we fail In either case, disaster is near If

the faking is successful, the speaker assumes he has given us messages which actually we have not received Sooner or later real blunders and breakdowns result If the faking fails, the communicator sees through our shallow deceit and is insulted He may become hostile and retaliatory about it

Students practice half-listening Often they stare at the professor, chins in hand, and after this overt display of courtesy feel free to drift off in any direction appealing to them

Good listening is not relaxed and passive at all In plain words, it is hard work Attention to speaking can be defined as a collection of tensions inside the listener that can be resolved only by getting some facts or ideas the speaker is trying to convey

Pitfall 7 False Courtesy

Occasionally a listener at the back in a large audience finds himself surrounded by a noisy clique making such a clatter that the speaker up front cannot be heard Should such a listener conclude that it would be rude to speak up either to interrupt the speaker by demanding greater volume or to quiet his neighbors? Never! Such reasoning is based upon false logic and false courtesy He ought to immediately wave an arm violently at the speaker, and in his loudest roar bellow at him, "Mister, can't hear you back here Mind if we wave whenever you get inaudible?"

There is only one answer the speaker can make He has to thank the person for his interest and turn on some decibels of intensity One absolute obligation every speaker carries is the obligation of audibility If he doesn't know this, he should be made aware of it

If our listener does not like the first option, a second is available Let him glower fiercely around him and suddenly scream at his neighbors, "QUIET", and then look up intently at the speaker

Pitfall 8 No Pain—No Strain

Many of us seem ever to seek the simple, the pleasant, the easy, and the recreational Such practice may lead to "no pain—no strain," but it is ruinous to effective listening

The 100 worst listeners were asked about their radio and television experiences Not one of them had listened regularly to serious public affairs programs such as "Meet the Press" Instead, they had become authorities on comedy, variety, and action programs The 100 best listeners

knew who the popular comedians were, of course, but they often watched the more challenging kinds of programs

For every two young people starting college today, one washes out before the end of the sophomore year, on most of our campuses, before the end of the freshman year At the other end of most of our four-year curricula, two or more companies are waiting to bid for the services of every young man to whom we can hand a four-year degree We suffer 50 per cent mortality on the input, we meet half the demand for our product on the output

Our worries increase when we read the reports coming back from Moscow If they are accurate, the Russians are losing fewer than 5 per cent of their high-ability crop of 18-year-olds every fall Persistently, by contrast, we lose 50 per cent of ours Our economy can ill afford this unnecessary drain of potential-trained brainpower It may be unnecessary, for there is at least a possibility that, if we could subject ourselves and our children to even 10 minutes of uncomfortably tough listening once a week for 12 years, we would not have the present great washout at the university-freshman level

Pitfall 9 Inflammatory Language

It is curious, but true, that a single emotion-laden word often has the power to cause a listener to tune out the speaker

The present writer discovered this truth accidentally several years ago In giving a talk to a large group of freshmen about the nature of speech, he found himself saying something like this to the group "You know, man was never born to be a speaking animal in the first place We have 26 organs in the midline of our bodies that we use to talk with, and every one was put inside us for a more primitive, biological purpose—such as breathing, chewing, swallowing, and the like Probably by plain accident some Stone Age man made a grunt of some kind, and with it initiated, through a long period of evolution, the development of the code we now call speech"

Some frozen looks appeared The speaker happened to have an objective test covering that particular lecture. Upon scoring the papers, he found that many of his freshmen had missed a cluster of items right after the one that dealt with the evolutionary character of speech Curious, he had interviews with them, trying to find out why To his astonishment, he discovered that 40 per cent of his freshmen had been warned by their parents before being allowed to enroll in "that big university" that among the faculty members the students were certain to encounter

a lot of atheistic professors, that these professors might try to undermine their students' religious faith, and that one way they could identify an atheist was when he started talking about evolution His students had simply identified him as an atheist because he had used the word "evolution" in a lecture Since their assumption was totally erroneous, he was furious But he learned one thing An easy way to lose 40 per cent of an audience is to use the word "evolution" when talking to a group of freshmen To avoid the loss, one needs only to say, "Speech is a long developmental process" The word *developmental* is acceptable!

A few years ago the present writer gave a talk at Lincoln, Nebraska, for a retail-sales convention His audience consisted of women only In trying to clarify a point, he said, "You clerks know what I mean You clerks must have had these experiences in your own stores" They froze up on him

At the end of his lecture five women approached him, loudly declaring, "We are not clerks!"

He said, "What do you like to be called?"

One said, "We are retail sales personnel And if you do not like that, you can call us salesladies But we are not clerks"

He learned a bitter truth that night Never call a female a clerk She will hate you for it, for some reason it is a fighting term

The word is not the thing It is merely a symbol for it Yet on and on we go through our lives letting symbols stand between us and self-growth If we but knew the 100 worst word barriers in the English language, we could rank order them according to their difficulty, discuss them in the classrooms of the nation, and put these silly barriers behind us

Pitfall 10 False Security

On the average, Americans talk 125 words a minute conversationally Put a man in front of an audience, however, and ask him to talk informatively, and he will slow down to 100 words a minute How many words a minute can people think as they listen, if all of their thoughts are measurable in words per minute? A variety of research all points to the same conclusion Easy cruising speed of thought is always at least 400 words a minute

Now the differential between 100 and 400 breeds false security, and this false security constitutes the worst listening pitfall we ever face *Almost everyone wastes the differential between speech speed and thought speed* This differential stimulates all kinds of mental tangents We tune a speaker in, and in 10 seconds are usually able to identify what he is

talking about We then feel free to exit for a 50-second mental holiday Then, because we have invested some energy getting to the meeting, we check in again, in 10 seconds find out what is being said, and treat ourselves to another 50-second holiday We are in for 10, out for 50, in for 10, out for 50 Really, it is not so bad if we always come back to the ten But sooner or later, on one of these mental excursions of ours, we may hit upon a topic too engrossing to drop

At some age levels we cannot be certain just what that mental topic would be But it is easy to follow in the case of the typical male college student He goes to his engineering class, and the professor begins his lecture as follows "Well, you think you are going to make engineers Some of you will, but some of you will not make a passing mark Be that as it may, if you make a success in your chosen career, it is going to be possible only if you have learned one fundamental thing on this campus, and that is that the most precious item an engineer ever owns, the thing with which he must learn to eat, sleep, live, and die at his side, is his slide rule Thus, this morning I am going to review with you all the mathematic computations possible with this instrument"

The student is thinking, "Is he really going to spend another 50 minutes on that stupid thing? We've been around it 16 times in other classes Got it first in junior high school" Tuning the professor in, he finds that sure enough the professor is multiplying one-digit numbers on the big slide rule Immediately the young man begins to think about his car and its flat tire and what he can do about it after class Fifty seconds later he checks in on the professor, who is now multiplying two-digit numbers on the big slide rule Immediately the student begins worrying about his chemistry test scheduled for Thursday morning Fifty seconds later he checks in on the professor again, who is now dividing one-digit numbers on the big slide rule

The young man tunes in and out about six times Then on one of the "outs" a very important subject comes to his attention Girls

The next thing he hears is the bell for the end of the hour Just then the professor says, "Remember when you take cube root "

"Cube root on a slide rule!" In panic, the boy grabs one of his classmates, just leaving, and says, "What's with this guy? How do you take cube root on a slide rule?" The friend does not know either, he has been out on some other mental tangent

We listen with only 25 per cent efficiency because we are hopping from one island of attention to another While we are on the speaker's island we do very well, but most of the time we are in transit or in another port and do not even hear what the man says Our basic problem is one of false security Our thought speed is so great that we overrely upon it, and get into deep trouble

THREE SAVING CENTRAL ABILITIES

As listeners, we can avoid many of the pitfalls besetting us by developing three saving central abilities These abilities greatly increase cognition from aural messages All three demand an increased expenditure of energy, all call for the listener to capitalize upon the differential between the speaker's speech speed and the listener's thought speed We greatly profit by making their practice habitual

The Ability to Overpower Distractions

Inevitably, scores of distracting stimuli turn up in every listening situation To escape them we should have to be isolated in some specially built, soundproof room Some of our most frequent distractions are uncomfortable temperatures, annoying speaking mannerisms, apparently dull topics, fatigue, bad acoustics, noisy air conditioners, restless audiences, and myriad unexpected noises occurring during the speech We either adjust to these stimuli, or we are defeated by them

To overpower distractions we must keep our minds operating at high speed and be continually concerned with the speaker's topic This can be accomplished by making automatic the practice of the following three mental activities, repeating them again and again whenever we listen to sustained discourse

Anticipate what the speaker is going to say next One of the best things we can do is to anticipate him and try to guess what his next main point is likely to be If we guess it is going to be point A and it turns out to be point A, learning is reinforced, for that point comes twice into our consciousness instead of once If we guess wrong, what then? If we guess it is going to be point Z, we are still the winner Out of curiosity alone most of us begin to compare Z with A If we do, we are then applying one of the soundest of all laws of learning—which is that we learn best by contrast and comparison with something else To anticipate—to "guess ahead"—is one wager in life we cannot lose Whether we guess right or wrong, we win

Identify what the speaker has for evidence No longer can a man go through life just asserting points He has to build them We must be able to identify the bricks, the mortar, the steel, and the wood with which the speaker supports each point he makes To do so will capitalize

upon the inbuilt advantage of thought speed over speech speed, and will give us a much safer foundation upon which to accept or reject his proposition

Recapitulate periodically as we listen The good listener will listen hard for four or five minutes, and then take a quick mental time out In that time he will hastily summarize in his mind the best points made in the preceding segment of discourse In ten seconds, with that enormous thought speed of ours, we can rephrase in our minds the best points made in five minutes of talk Half a dozen of these mental summaries interspersed throughout a 45- or 50-minute lecture will double our retention and understanding

These three accomplishments pay big dividends We ought to cash them in and make them work for us To do so will take more energy, but it will be a profitable investment To automatically anticipate, identify, and recapitulate are our best hopes for "flattening the forgetting curve" and for greatly improving our overall listening performance

The Ability to Structure Content

When we listen to connected discourse, it is almost always possible to detect a pattern of some kind in it Even in informal conversation the participants usually go through the same three steps of verifying each other's health ("How are you?"), of verifying each other's progress ("How's it going?"), and of wishing each other well ("Take care of yourself")!

Ninety per cent of all organized talks fall into one of four basic patterns The most common arrangement is one of a variety of sequence relationships For example, the speaker may discuss the past, present, and future of some problem or program The chronological structure of his talk is readily apparent A second pattern involves a spatial relationship In this instance the speaker might discuss the application of his ideas on the Atlantic Seaboard, in the Midwest, and upon the Pacific Coast A third pattern is also extremely common and has but two points in it presentation of a problem and discussion of a possible solution for it Indeed, this procedure has become almost universally labeled the problem-solution structure for speech making The fourth arrangement is climactic, and is usually formed by asking and answering several questions of increasing significance For example, a speaker might build his discussion of a general sales tax around these four questions· Does our state need more revenue? Would a sales tax provide this revenue? Is the sales tax fair and equitable? Is there an alternative way to meet our needs? Climax and suspense grow with the answering of each successive question.

Visual imagery greatly enhances learning. To perceive the *structure* of the communications we receive substantially increases our comprehension of them, and the sooner we can identify the pattern the better. Structuralizing speech content tends to help us separate fact from principle, argument from evidence, idea from illustration, assertion from reasoned conclusion. It tends to increase our interest in the content and to make it possible for us to remember longer both the facts and ideas we hear.

It is quite possible that a talk to which we are listening may not contain a discernible organizational pattern. In this case we should start to take notes in a "fact-versus-principle" fashion. This requires two parallel columns on the notepaper, with the word *facts* written at the top of one column, and the word *principles* written at the top of the other. Whenever either one of these items is produced by the speaker, it should be listed in the appropriate column. As our lists grow, we can try to visualize an outline we ourselves might have used had we been giving the speech. We may want to sketch in such an outline at the bottom of the page as we listen, or, if the speech content has deep significance for us, compose the outline after the talk is completed.

The Ability to Maintain Emotional Control

All too often we become ineffective listeners or nonlisteners because of an emotional condition. The most common causes of our loss of control are personal dislikes for the speaker, his central proposition, his language, or his line of argument.

How can we develop an ability to control our own emotions? Our central purpose in listening is not to develop ulcers, but to assimilate as many important facts and ideas as possible. Often useful facts and ideas come from obnoxious sources. The almost universal game of brainpicking can be played with hostile characters as well as with friends. If we do not listen to an opponent, we have little chance to understand or to influence him. In a large sense we are at the mercy of any man who understands us better than we do him, and the best way to increase understanding of a man is to listen carefully to his argument. Our listening is most effective when we succeed in establishing some *psychic distance* between us and the speaker, then comprehending his argument can be kept uppermost in our minds.

Two other factors contribute to emotional control. First, make certain that we always understand the other fellow's point before we judge it. We can and should make habitual the practice of withholding evaluation until we are certain our comprehension is complete. Second,

intend to report, accurately, the hostile message The intended reporting may be to wife, friend, or associate, but we ought always to identify in our mind to whom we will report Our intention to report will, in itself, more closely limit our emotional arousal

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Evaluating the Message

CHAPTER 12

Effective listening is not completed until messages are evaluated We receive about 500 messages daily, and of these, two kinds are predominant those that are essentially informative and those that are essentially persuasive The listener should develop the power to weigh both kinds objectively

Informative and persuasive messages are not mutually exclusive Often, distinctly expository elements are inserted into what is basically persuasive discourse When a speaker describes how it is possible for the listener to *apply* informational material, the content bearing upon *application* often sounds highly persuasive

Despite overlapping, it is almost always possible for a listener to decide whether a message is predominantly informative or persuasive If the speaker is explaining how something is made, done, defined, or classified, he is speaking informatively Exposition is predominant On the other hand, if the speaker is seeking to change the belief or action of his listener in some way, he is speaking persuasively It must also be understood that our purposes in listening to our associates are by no means limited to acquiring information or to deciding upon how to react to some speaker's proposition Actually, our purposes in listening to one

another may well exceed 20 factors Included among them are the following

1 To be entertained
2 To enjoy the quality of the presentation itself
3 To get answers to specific questions
4 To stimulate the speaker to speak more effectively
5 To learn through listening as a substitute for reading
6 To gain confidence in our ability to listen
7 To reduce tension
8 To permit the speaker to solve his own problem by "talking it out"
9 To win friends
10 To avoid self-embarrassment through irrelevant response
11 To earn the right to speak
12 To improve personal decision making
13 To learn the motives actuating the speaker
14 To resolve controversy
15 To gain time to think
16 To lay the groundwork for our own persuasive efforts

Despite the many and varied purposes that may occasionally motivate our listening, for most of us the overwhelming majority of all message evaluation involves either informative or persuasive speech Let us see how such messages can be evaluated and classified

ON-THE-SPOT VERSUS DELAYED EVALUATION

Many messages can be weighed with reasonable accuracy as soon as they are received This is almost always true when the topic is familiar, and one upon which we have personal convictions When a speaker's message, therefore, violates or substantiates one of these beliefs, we can often appraise it "on the spot"

There are other instances in which on-the-spot evaluation serves reasonably well A shouted warning that our life is in danger permits no delay in our response The previous chapter emphasized the development of three central skills Once the listener has acquired these skills and puts them into practice, he will from time to time appraise the truth or significance of some messages at the very moment he hears them In order to overpower distraction, for instance, the listener will anticipate the speaker's point, identify the evidence used to support it, and recapitulate

mentally the points presented This procedure in itself often enables the listener to evaluate the content and permits him to make a thoughtful judgment Furthermore, the listener will attempt to improve comprehension by searching for the structural pattern within the message Again, the search in itself tends to separate the important from the unimportant and permits the setting aside of much of the message as being irrelevant or insignificant

But on-the-spot evaluation does not go far enough Often it is inaccurate, often it is fragmentary Still more importantly, the significant messages we receive seem to defy quick evaluation Unless we weigh them thoughtfully and at length, we risk unwise interpretation of vital matters Adequate time for appraisal is usually not available in the immediate listening situation Every person would be greatly benefited if at the end of each day he were to set aside a reflection period in which to evaluate with care the four or five most significant messages he has received during that day Dependent on the individual, of course, this daily evaluation period might be most effective when scheduled during the interval after retiring for the night, just before going to sleep Such a "reflection hour" may require only a few moments, maybe an hour, but the time we invest in it pays large dividends

INFORMATIVE MESSAGES

Three questions are helpful to us when we try to evaluate informative discourse Brief notes taken in the immediate listening situation may help us to arrive at the answers to these questions Our final review of the speaker's material may well come after some time has elapsed, but it would seem wise to delay our final review as little as possible

What Did He Say?

Our first concern in starting a comprehensive evaluation should be to verify our comprehension of the message The groundwork for delayed analysis is best laid by earlier preparation for it Whenever a speaker presents an unclear exposition, the listener may interject an immediate question For example, he might say "I'm sorry, but I think you've lost me Would you be willing to clarify that point?" Or, "I'm not certain that is entirely clear to me To what persons or groups are you suggesting our reports should be sent?"

Is It True?

The second concern in the evaluative process is to determine the truth or accuracy of the message being reviewed Such determination is possible only when we carefully relate what has been reported to our experience If the new instruction does not fit into a broad spectrum of truth as we know it, we should take steps to gather evidence that will help us to estimate its accuracy reliably Actually, most of us have been advised for so long by so many sources to "think critically" that given adequate time for its consummation this second step in appraisal seems a very natural one All of us listen with our previous experience, we judge the truth of any new message on the basis of what we already know to be true

We should ask supplementary questions to explore the context of the message, such as "How does he know?" and "What is he leaving out?" Often we know enough about the background of the speaker to establish conviction about his being or not being "in a position to know" Concerning the question "But what is he leaving out?" all of us occasionally select the facts and ideas we convey to others, perhaps without meaning to do so We nevertheless report a part-truth that may do more harm than good unless it is kept in proper perspective

If So, What of It?

Let us suppose that in appraising an idea or an instructive passage we are satisfied with the answers to the first two questions, we believe we know what the speaker meant, and we feel that he told the truth A third query must be raised and answered We must satisfy ourselves that the speaker's *interpretation* leads logically to his recommended application

Recently a speaker explained to an interested group that the time to buy stocks had now arrived, for the market was about to take a strong upward turn He cited three large corporations that had just distributed markedly increased dividends on their stocks "This," he said, "is good evidence of a forthcoming rise in stock values generally" The speaker's message was clear, and his facts concerning the three corporations were accurate, but his interpretation of these facts was 100 per cent wrong The stock market was headed down, and the three corporations had declared increased dividends in the hope of attracting fresh capital badly needed for the operation of their companies

Is the speaker's interpretation of his facts reasonable? What

other interpretations are there? Only when these questions are answered to our personal satisfaction should we accept the expository messages we receive We can avoid errors by devoting time during our reflection hour to the three queries of "What did he say?" "Is it true?" and "If so, what of it?"

PERSUASIVE MESSAGES

The person who talks to inform achieves his goal when his listener learns needed facts and understands their significance The persuader achieves his goal when a desired change of attitude takes place or when the action-outcome of his communication is completed We refer to the outcome of persuasion as *controversial* because one or more alternatives exist The receiver chooses among two or more available possibilities If the persuasive message succeeds, it helps him settle on one as his choice The matter is *controversial,* because he cannot be sure he selected the best alternative

The persuader, then, goes beyond supplying information to receivers Certainly he "informs," but he adds another stage to the process He builds not only understanding of the options inherent in a situation but a preference for a particular choice as well

Evidence is verifiable information When it occurs in informative messages it serves as justification for summary statements or conclusions that help a receiver better understand its significance When evidence is used in persuasive messages it plays a different role It supports a *controversial* statement, i e , causes the listener to prefer a particular point of view instead of other contrasting possibilities

Evidence and Reasoning Work Together

Evidence and reasoning are inseparable in persuasion Each influences the other in a highly contingent fashion The practical implication of this interaction is that study of either in isolation is impossible without distortion Hence, we attempt to give joint consideration to the supplementary relationship of evidence and reasoning as they combine in various patterns of argument

This abstract doctrine of inseparability may be clarified by an example Let the proposition under discussion be that study of foreign language should be a requirement for a liberal arts college degree Evidence is introduced showing that since the University of Minnesota removed this requirement nine years ago, teaching of foreign languages in

high schools of this state has steadily decreased, until at present two-thirds of the high schools offer training in no language other than English, and three-quarters of them offer no modern foreign language Also, a study of subjects elected by college students reveals that 80 per cent of those having studied foreign language in high school go on to further foreign language study, whereas less than 20 per cent of those without this experience elect foreign language during their college careers How important is this evidence?

Two criteria of its worth are its authenticity and accuracy, but once we have determined that the sources yielding this information are accepted, and that the figures are representative of the situation under study, the interpretation of the evidence becomes dependent upon context For one thing, the worth of the evidence depends upon our assumptions If we assume that it is important for high schools to offer foreign language courses, then one means of bringing about that state of affairs is to reinstate a foreign language requirement for all colleges and universities offering liberal arts degrees But if we assume that foreign language study has no place in the high school, then the evidence that it is on the decrease has little weight in helping us decide whether or not it should be required in college

The evidence that some foreign language study leads to more may be highly important in one pattern of reasoning, for example, in the one that argues that foreign language departments will be kept prosperous by a language requirement In another pattern supporting the contention that foreign language study is relatively unimportant for the student specializing in science, this evidence has some, but limited, relevance, hence is weak

Our simple example dramatizes the fact that evidence is "strong" *only to the extent that it reinforces a particular unit of reasoning* Requirements for evidence are dependent upon the reasoning involved, and the available evidence limits in turn the reasoning that can be attempted "Strong evidence" in isolation is not meaningful "Strong reasoning" without evidence is meaningful only when information that is common knowledge is clearly implied. Our treatment of methods of argument highlights the interdependence of reasoning and evidence, supplying means of joint consideration and evaluation When we discuss evidence we will do so in a particular context of reasoning, and when we examine reasoning it will always be in terms of cited evidence

Evaluating Evidence in Persuasion

Just as with informative messages, we need answers to three questions of "What did he say?" "Is it true?" and "If so, what of it?" for

accurate evaluation of propositions based on evidence Our procedure with questions one and three should closely parallel that used with respect to informative messages But with question two, we need to determine more precisely the credibility of each proposition or major argument presented

It is fortunate for the listener that whenever evidence is used it can be evaluated Whenever a speaker makes an assertion he either does or does not support it with evidence If no evidence is submitted and no credible explanation for its absence is offered, then of course the assertion is suspect If evidence is submitted, be it either testimonial or statistical in character, to be convincing it must be attributed to a specific source As soon as the hearer identifies its purported source, he can and should immediately set about testing the value of it

THE FIRST TEST

The first test listeners should mentally make about any piece of evidence is that of recency A quoted statement by the Secretary of State dated 1965, for example, would in most instances carry much less weight than one issued yesterday Statistics gathered last year by the Census Bureau would in most instances and on most issues have more meaning for us than those gathered ten years ago Is the evidence the speaker is submitting too old to support adequately the point he would establish? Usually a quick answer can be given, and a partial evaluation of his argument can be made

THE SECOND TEST

The second test we should apply to each piece of evidence submitted is the competency of its source Testimony of a Hollywood starlet on the excellence of engineering in a late-model automobile is much less convincing than would be that of a mechanic with 20 years' experience in a garage Statistics gathered by the Bureau of the Census, or any independently operated fact-gathering agency, are much more convincing than those produced through a small-scale survey made by some local person or group Evidence cannot be more convincing than the source from which it comes On this basis we can make our second assessment of the speaker's assortment of information

THE THIRD TEST

The third test to apply to each piece of evidence submitted concerns the neutrality or the lack of prejudice existing in its source Sup-

pose, for example, that one of our neighbors, Citizen Jones, has testified that the North Park Addition contains land that is certain to double in value within the next ten years. But we know that Citizen Jones owns one-fourth of all the lots in North Park Addition! Immediately the evidence is suspect. It fails to pass the free-from-prejudice test. Or suppose that the Zee Wee Pump Company has submitted testimony to the effect that every home should contain a Zee Wee pump. Its obviously prejudiced source makes such evidence worthless.

The third test is the most important of the three. The best way to apply it is to ask ourselves this question: "Does the person or organization supplying this evidence stand to gain something through its acceptance?" Independent, fact-gathering agencies—often a part of State or Federal Government—are usually free from prejudice. Normally, they are reliable sources. Of them all, the United States Bureau of the Census is probably our best single source of statistical information.

Application of the free-from-prejudice test will shed light on the motives of the speaker or his witnesses, or both. It will permit us to complete a sensible evaluation of the argument the speaker would have us accept.

Evaluating Reasoning in Persuasion

Frequently a speaker will attempt to influence us without citing evidence of statistics or testimony. He may cite an example. Or he may reason from analogy, from personal experience, from syllogistic logic, or from what he deems to be accepted principles, philosophies, mores, or traditions. On the basis of his analysis he will draw certain conclusions and urge others to accept and act upon his views. For the listener the situation poses a challenge. Often the conclusion does seem reasonable. Complicating the problem is the fact that often a workable conclusion is reached through completely unsound reasoning.

For centuries civilized man has tried to think straight, to avoid the pitfalls into which he tumbles whenever he acts upon conclusions drawn without establishing step-by-step a comprehensive cause-effect basis for them. These pitfalls are labeled "fallacies in reasoning," and there are a great many of them. Few of us spend the time needed to study and to analyze them all. Fortunately the whole problem can be vastly simplified for most of us.

Three fallacies alone account for the majority of the problems in reasoning that we encounter. Let us put them into the simplest language possible and consider them in turn.

"ALWAYS HAS, ALWAYS WILL"

One of the most natural of all conclusions in this world is to assume that if something has always been true, it always will be true Yet to reason thus is to be guilty of what is probably the oldest of all fallacies It is interesting to speculate on how much the progress of civilized man was delayed because of this attitude during the first 5,000 years or so of recorded history Until the last few hundred years, only a few medicine men and philosophers were inclined to ask the question "Why?" We lived by traditions, superstitions, and rituals that had long since outgrown their usefulness Consider the following two statements made by speakers

A "Actually, the number of wars breaking out in this world seems to be increasing instead of decreasing We've always had wars and we always will Maybe we'd better just learn to live with them "

B "One thing is for sure We've always had prostitution, and we always will You can't show me one country without its prostitutes I figure the best thing to do is to try to keep them bunched up pretty well, but otherwise leave them alone "

Neither statement seems particularly immoderate Many of our citizenry would probably agree with both of them Yet each contains a perfect example of the "always has, always will" fallacy True, our world may always have had wars and prostitutes But we cannot conclude that this will always be the case simply because it was so in the past Did not the Wright brothers refute the fallacy that objects heavier than air will crash back to earth?

HASTY GENERALIZATION

A second pitfall almost certain to trap most of us very often is that of drawing a conclusion based upon far too few cases It is called the fallacy of hasty generalization One reason it is so common is that we are in a hurry to reach a workable conclusion Consider the following pronouncement

> Man, I'm off compacts for life I've had two of 'em in a row now, and both turned out to be lemons From now on, I'm gonna' go for standard sized cars and make sure I get some I can depend on

Most of us cannot wait We make many of our decisions on a very small number of cases in point and often are trapped by our lack of caution Fortunately, we do seem to guess correctly once in a while, or

perhaps we just live with our decisions and argue their soundness because they are "ours "

UNCONTROLLED VARIABLE

The fallacy of the uncontrolled variable arises from the conclusion that when two things occur in sequence, reliably, one must somehow be causing the other It is a fallacy in reasoning to conclude that this is so without verifying cause-and-effect relationship Often a hidden and uncontrolled variable lies beneath the surface of what all seems so apparent Consider the following passages

A Good notebooks make good students Look around you The better scholars are always those with the better notebooks

B Participation in sports is not dangerous, for heaven's sake, it actually increases life expectancy We've kept track of the average life span of former Harvard crewmen now for more than 80 years Their average life expectancy is 6 1 years greater than that of the typical citizen

For many years it was widely assumed that good notebooks did cause high scholarship, for we always found that good students were usually carrying well-kept notebooks under their arms Today we are much less certain of our reasoning than we were 40 years ago In recent years educators are seriously wondering which is the cause and which is the effect Do good notebooks cause good students, or do good students busily build good notebooks out of some excessive conscientiousness that has no other accepted means of release? The truth may well turn out to be that the real value of notes is inversely related to their volume

The hidden variable with respect to Harvard crewmen is the factor of selection Healthy, normal men only are allowed to participate in crew Individuals of the same health and physique *without* sports participation would perhaps have lived at least as long

It is almost impossible to identify all the uncontrolled variables hidden in even the more significant persuasive messages slanted our way To use part of our daily reflection hour to search for and identify them is a valuable investment of time

UNREASONED, UNSUPPORTED APPEALS

In our society we are constantly besieged by almost countless spoken appeals to believe or to act in accordance with diverse politicians, ministers, and publishers, soap, cereal, and cosmetic companies, philanthropies, charities, foundations, churches, missions, hospitals, land com-

panies, and travel agencies The list is almost endless Fortunately, the bulk of the appeals are brief, conveyed by our various mass media, and can be arbitrarily rejected, tuned out, or disregarded because they are irrelevant to our central concerns Periodically, however, some appeal more subtle and directly relevant may prompt us to make some important personal decision If this particular strategy is artistically composed and delivered, it may prove difficult for us to resist Therefore, it is important for us to give at least some attention to the brief short-circuit appeals, often serialized and frequently repeated, with which we are continually bombarded

The appeals of immediate concern are not well-developed informative or persuasive messages Perhaps the best way to categorize them is *imitation argument* Today, more than ever before in history, we are assailed by a continuous stream of attention-compelling nonsense emanating from individuals whose living depends upon their salesmanship or from pressure groups trying to manipulate our beliefs In a sense their discourse is persuasive, for surely their goals are belief or action, but this is persuasion at its lowest plane, with little effort to accumulate and present evidence or to reason objectively All seek to move us in one direction or another, to sell us something, to control our beliefs, our actions, and even our value systems, and to accomplish this by pleasantly agitating our receptor mechanisms

The men employing "imitation argument" are "committed" speakers, that is, they have personally declared allegiance to a certain product or point of view—sometimes with conviction, but many times without it Their avowed intention is to influence us, with or without ethical considerations guiding their efforts Unless we are to become helpless before their swelling tide, we must build some kind of self-defense to the waves of specious influence besetting us A legal approach is impractical, for in America perhaps our most precious possession—freedom of speech—is guaranteed by our Constitution to all men, whether their thinking be straight or crooked

The Methods of Imitation Argument

We all resort to imitation argument at times, thoughtfully and thoughtlessly In the heat of conflict in particular we deviate from objectivity and bludgeon our opponents with beside-the-point but often effective rejoinders As listeners, the proper response to imitation argument directed toward us is to be objective about it We can ask how the point made relates to the central issue, or what factual basis underlies the reasonable-sounding statement, or we can say, "May I restate your point in less colorful language, to be sure I understand just what it means?" Being

critical about imitation argument, then, consists mainly of slowing its momentum If source and receiver stop to think about the point and thoughtfully analyze it, the argument usually evaporates spontaneously

The present writers recognize that dozens of categories of unsupported, unreasoned argument exist We have selected five to include in this chapter, on the basis of their frequent occurrence in interpersonal relations in the modern organization These short-circuit, diversionary tactics and point-blunting maneuvers are sufficiently common so that the reader will be able to recall parallels from his own experiences Each time one of these methods is used, distortion is increased and the fidelity of communication suffers Consequently, the able communicator must be sensitive to these procedures, be able to counter and control them, and scrupulously avoid their use himself

1 *Ridicule* A devastating way to demolish an idea—or a person—is to induce others to laugh at it—or him The loudmouth who has great talent for poking fun at others may exert disproportionate influence in the small work group People with knowledge hesitate to advance it, lest they become the target of ridicule The unfairness of this method lies in turning attention from a point at issue to an irrelevant element that provides humor "A man who would wear that tie can be expected to have queer ideas!" A possibly meritorious idea or a bit of valuable information is "lost in the laugh "

Seldom if ever do sarcasm, innuendo, and satire contribute anything worthwhile to task-oriented interpersonal communication Situation Joe, an aggressive salesman, has confidently predicted over a period of months a large sale to a major corporation Just when confirmation seemed certain, a competitor with a new product got the order At the sales meeting the following Monday the sales manager begins, "Joe, would you share with us the secrets of your success with XYZ company?" If the sales manager is skilled enough to keep the sentence casual and inoffensive, it *might* serve as a tension reliever and become one of those rare cases when "razzing" is constructive But at least nine times of ten it will hurt Joe unnecessarily and cause the other salesmen to react to it as an undeserved twisting of the knife Ridicule as persuasion is a counterargument device, a point-blunting technique It cannot be used to advance acceptance of information and ideas Its goal is to secure rejection

2 *Ad hominem* Here we use a classic Latin term that designates "argument to motive and character of the speaker " Whenever the source shifts the base of his argument from the facts of the case to a person who is involved, he is using *ad hominem* argument to the man rather than to the issue

The most popular *ad hominem* imitation argument is one that

imputes motives Recently, the director of the Communication Center of X University submitted a proposal to place all of the university's instructional films in the Center library and thereby increase their use His proposal was reviewed by the administrative committee The vice-president of Academic Affairs rose and solemnly declared "We must remember that *the* reason for this recommendation is the desire of the Center director to build an empire"

Now, no one on the committee *knew* that this reason ever entered the mind of the director as he evolved his plan But because it seemed to be "logical" several committee members accepted the vice-president's statement Note that the words "We must remember " made the imputed motive that followed more believable

Sometimes *good* motives are imputed, but not often We prefer to believe that the behavior of our peers is actuated by antisocial motivation Why we persist in this refusal to give our fellow human beings the benefit of the doubt is buried in our cultural heritage To avoid being unfair to our associates in this regard, we recommend strict adherence to this principle *In the absence of substantial evidence, never impute an unwholesome motive to another human being*

Ad hominem is used to advance propositions by associating them with persons who are admired, respected, and have high prestige "I was chatting with the president the other day, and he said he hoped we could move in this direction" The president's remark, if it is accurately reported, may have been thoughtful or casual, and "in this direction" is sufficiently vague to embrace a multitude of subdirections Television advertising may feature an attractive, dynamic girl, who points dramatically at the viewer and shouts, "Dodge Wants You!" Personal traits and character of the speaker divert us from the more mechanical considerations in selecting an automobile Miscellaneous name-dropping helps gain acceptance also, even though it is the most "unreasoning" form of *ad hominem* Simply mentioning prominent individuals who are interested in the new community theatre project will increase contributions from prospective donors

3 *Ad populum* Where *ad hominem* shifts ground to a person, *ad populum* imitation argument performs a similar diversion from the issue to popular prejudice The source of power in *ad populum* is in beliefs and values of a culture Every grouping of people on the surface of the earth has a body of shared convictions, ways of behaving and believing that are fundamental to their society When a speaker builds into his argument references to "what everybody knows" or "what everybody believes" he has usually left the original issue and is resorting to *ad populum*

Oriental cultures talk more about "saving face" than we do, but the concept of "face" and its preservation at all cost is just as real in the United States as in Japan. Frequently an arguer resorts to this kind of statement: "I know we don't think this is sound and we'd like to change right now, but don't forget our image! If we don't carry through with this, the rest of the company will charge us with INCONSISTENCY!" Here is *ad populum* in action, appealing to our cultural value of consistency and our great contemporary concern with our "image," or "face."

We are thoroughly infused with stereotyped, half-true popular prejudices about people and problems, that persist in infiltrating our discussion of issues. We generalize about members of diverse professions as well as minority groups, each generalization representing a popular prejudice. When we add to beliefs about people our beliefs about "natural order for events" and then to that our complex notions about "what should and should not be," we have an impressive array of irrelevant ammunition for imitation argument.

Many popular beliefs are completely untrue, but still are impressive in persuasion. Take this example, "It is good in theory, but it will not work out in practice." For many years there has been agreement that the only meaningful test of theory is "will it work?" Hence our example is but a self-contradiction. Yet such *ad populum* appeals are often used among physicians, engineers, academics, and other people who should know better.

A sophisticated modern version of the *ad populum* fallacy is often provided by the public opinion poll. Numerous polling services gather opinions about a wide variety of political candidates and contemporary issues. They report that only 40 per cent of the people in the state favor a sales tax, or that in a trial heat with the President, candidate X was preferred by 52 per cent of the people.

If we recall our previous discussion of the interaction of evidence and reasoning, it is clear that for some arguments public opinion would be good evidence. If a delegate is arguing with representatives of a state political party that candidate X is the one to nominate because he is more likely to be elected, the evidence of the candidate's popularity with the people would be useful. However, if the question relates to candidate X's qualifications for the office, it may fall into the *ad populum* fallacy. Certainly, the use of public opinion polls to justify policies such as tax programs, urban renewal, and other important proposals may become argument *ad populum*, particularly if the persuasive messages contain no consideration of the feasibility, cost, and beneficial results of the plan.

The key for critical listening to *ad populum* imitation argument is the question, "How do you know that is true?" Pursuing the answer to

this question with some persistence will locate what, if any, substance underlies the popular belief

4 *Oversimplification* The difficulty of communicating complex events with a few words and in limited time causes simplification to be necessary and frequent It becomes oversimplification when (1) harmful distortion results from details arbitrarily left out, or (2) it is purposely used as a method of promoting acceptance when a more full and accurate version would be rejected

People tend to think "in headlines" (often called "tabloid thinking") and they prefer their messages simple and clear no matter how intricate and complicated a predicament may be We are inclined to read the lead paragraph in a news story, the one that hits the high spots of the reported event We stop there, without permitting ourselves an opportunity to become confused by the facts of the case A superficial knowledge enables us to perceive a complex situation as simple Laziness or our pressure-filled way of life may cause us to resist the intricate details of reality This human characteristic will perpetuate book review journals, condensations of novels, and capsule synopses of great literature Truly, man welcomes simplification, this is one of the main reasons for its being overdone

The most prevalent oversimplification in interpersonal communication comes from ignoring multiple causation Most events involving people have a host of contributing causes We know this, yet are quite capable of asking, "What was *the* cause of World War II?"

In organizational communication single-cause thinking is an ever-present pitfall Situation A middle management team is analyzing poor coordination between design engineering and drafting in a fast-moving electronics industry They discover that the head of engineering is the terminal point for communications from drafting He alone reads or hears drafting's messages, and if he passes any of them along to personnel in his unit, these are shortened and liberally paraphrased Most such messages die on his desk and are buried in his wastebasket

The investigating team is pleased at unearthing one substantial and verified cause of the problem Their impulse is to stop investigating and report If they do, their communication to higher management will be an oversimplification, for whether they intend to or not, their message will give the impression that *a* cause is *the* cause Such is almost certain not to be the case

Every large organization generates its own ideals, heroes, red herrings, and scapegoats—its recurrent themes of communication associated with success and failure Most prevalent among these themes is *personifi-*

cation People come to stand for the units associated with their names Usually the name of the senior manager comes to represent the operation, although an outstanding individual, e g , a talented design engineer, may fill this role Instead of crediting many people in a division of the company with an accomplishment, we tend to say, "Joe South pulled it off!" And in event of failure we hear, "Boy, Joe sure blew that one!"

Why do we *personify* organizational activities in this way? Because the difficulty of comprehending the complexity of many coordinated efforts is so great that we seize upon the scapegoat or hero device of ascribing results—or lack of results—to one man While his abilities are involved these are but a small part of the picture of multiple causation In fact, the part is treated as the whole, a classic case of oversimplification

Another cause of the universal tendency to personify organizations is the attractiveness of the colorful, individual personality A person with peculiarities, strengths, and weaknesses catches our fancy as no large group effort ever can A colorful President becomes the National Administration in Washington The Department of Agriculture seems a part of the person who is its Secretary These persons often have charismatic qualities in their own right, but by serving as the personification of huge and important activities, their charisma is substantially augmented

Obviously, many advantages flow from leader-organization personification Loyalty and dedication are made possible, and the fame of the selected leaders may benefit their units, directly and indirectly But a real disadvantage of personification comes from centering praise and blame in a few people One result is the "indispensable" person "the Civic Center would collapse without old Sam" Another disadvantage confuses operational problems and personalities For example, there may be a crying need for general overhaul of a retail operation, but the solution is seen in terms of a personality "Fire the general manager" Employees who should be working diligently to improve the quality of their work may see their salvation in a personality, "If we can hire so-and-so, everything will be all right" There may be some sense in hiring a new quarterback as a panacea for a professional football team, but seldom is replacement of a single key individual a blanket cure for organizational ills The belief that such is the case is a popular and costly oversimplification

It is important to remember that simplification is frequently necessary, even desirable A simplified yet sound representation of involved relationships can be developed for special purposes For example, high school students need to be and are taught atomic fusion Assembly-line workers should understand the operations of the entire industry of which they are a part, but they need not have great depth of detailed knowledge Simplifying to produce a given level of understanding in a

particular audience is a central communication task If accomplished without deception or harmful distortion, it merits high praise As mathematicians put it, elegance is true simplicity

5 *Word magic* Words are used for three purposes that result in imitation argument (1) to confuse, (2) to impress, and (3) to conceal Because the intended effect is other than any clearly stated or implied purpose, we label this unsupported and unreasoned rhetoric *word magic* Trickery of one sort or another is the common theme found in all units of language dedicated to the above-listed purposes

It is said, and wisely, that sooner or later every speaker finds himself in a situation when he knows that speaking clearly will cause him to fail At the moment of realization, his sentences become more lengthy and involved, he begins to use strange and specialized terms, he inserts dependent and independent clauses, with many "buts," "howevers," and "whereases" Soon his listeners look puzzled This particular confusion technique succeeds in convincing the receivers that the matter is too complicated for them to grasp For a good example of this phenomenon, watch an interview on television when a politician is guest, and wait for a sharp, specific question which, if answered directly, will lose the office holder some votes

Although a great amount of communication in organizations results in confusion, the authors are convinced that most of it is unintentional But there are instances when members want to avoid taking a clear position Some are experts in "double talk" In a controversy they tiptoe down the dividing line so delicately, with balanced excursions in both directions, that proponents of opposite sides are sure the speaker agrees with them Such wishy-washy fence-straddling may be an exciting exhibition in skilled use of language, but it contributes little to problem solution or conflict resolution It is dedicated to self-preservation and personal advancement of the speaker

When words are used to impress rather than to inform or persuade, progress slows The speaker's central purpose is the desire to build up his image He wishes to be regarded as knowledgeable, erudite, insightful, and most important, as being abreast of all new developments

One way to impress is to use meaningless fine-sounding language An abundance of unneeded technical terms, a fluent display of unfamiliar words, similes, and metaphors from various fields, or simply stating the obvious in ponderous fashion, e g , "The future lies ahead," all these are time-wasters and diversions from the task These tactics are undesirable, and the more their use can be excised from interpersonal communication, the better

A slightly more sophisticated way of impressing is to use the

newest fads in terms and phrases These may be the jargon of your specialization or of your organization, or terms more generally used In the late 1960's, in this category were terms like "dialogue," for "discussion" or "conference," "viable," "explore in depth," "interface," "change agent," "innovate," and finally, "thrust," as in "What is the thrust of your question?" The fad artist learns to drop a usage as soon as the majority of his associates have acquired it Fortunately for him, the coinage of new phraseology is continuous and voluminous

Speaking to impress can be done in a third manner that is, in a sense, the reverse of the first two namely, by being a man of few words If you look thoughtful, chew your pipe, pay attention, and produce your rare monosyllables at strategic times, you can be exceedingly impressive People will listen carefully to what you say, and because there is so little of it, they will assume your words to be carefully chosen and will attach great significance to them They will not suspect that you are a word magician

The final type of word magic, speaking to conceal, is made possible by a specialized jargon that is quite clear to the in-group but effectively hides meaning from any out-group In civilian life the medical doctors and lawyers maintain the use of enough specialized terms to thwart any would-be listener who lacks medical or legal training Industrial concerns find communication among different groups of specialists obstructed by the persistence with which each group clings to its jargon

In-group language serves several purposes It promotes rapport and feelings of unity, it protects the members from invasion by barbarians, and it enables members to understand each other, at the same time permitting them to control how much they permit other units and higher management to learn Thus, concealment through jargon becomes a valued protective device that guards an assortment of vested interests and thus impedes overall organizational communication

The Ethics of Imitation and Nonlogical Argument

This chapter has attempted to provide ideas and suggestions that will help the reader to become a more thoughtful and evaluative listener Although the advice given has been predominantly negative–suggesting what should not be done–a variety of positive practices were clearly implied However, avoiding the detrimental practices will in itself raise the effectiveness of interpersonal communication

The final section of the chapter condemned certain unsupported and unreasoned appeals The reader will be thinking, Are *all* nonlogical units of persuasive communication to be rejected? Must every recommendation be implemented by evidence and reasoning? The authors hold that

not all appropriate and useful messages to bring about change are reasoned Many effect acceptance of a proposition without the person to be persuaded knowing that any persuasion has taken place, through a process we term "suggestion" We endorse the method of nonlogical appeal as long as it is not deceptive By "deceptive" we mean its use to turn attention away from the facts of the case or to produce an emotional state that prevents reflective deliberation The ethical principle we recommend as a guide is this *Suggestion should not be used to advance a proposition that would be rejected if the receivers knew the facts of the case*

It may well be true that we are at the mercy of every individual who understands us better than we understand him, and that if we become enslaved it will be to someone who understands us better than we understand ourselves However, these dangers are not as great as they seem For to *really* understand us, a man must listen to us, and if he has the courage to listen to us, and we make sense, he will frequently find his own position altered

The key to persuasion, then, is truth If we are to find it, advocacy, dissent, and discussion must all be encouraged Once truth is revealed, the artful and deceitful employer of the tricks of persuasion has little chance to control and manipulate our lives As Aristotle put it, "When the two are presented with equal skill, truth is always more persuasive than falsehood"

Let none of us doubt the desirability, therefore, of employing the known techniques of persuasion in order to influence the lives of others There is but one ethical consideration Are we treating "those others" as we ourselves would be treated? If the truth is on our side, we should not hesitate to present it skillfully, actually, we should feel obligated to do so

Chapter 13 examines logical and nonlogical means of persuasion in some detail, and from the point of view of the source The question to what degree an ethical communicator wishes to rely on suggestion will serve as an excellent topic for the reader's daily reflection hour Chapter 13 hopefully will make consideration of this type easier for the reader

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Persuasion—the Winning of Willing Cooperation

CHAPTER 13

In earlier chapters we have pinpointed difficulties in organizational communication by narrating rather typical concrete examples Each of these cases has had two dimensions informing and persuading

The reader will recall that the first box in our Model of the Process of Communication (p 26) includes these two intents (or purposes) for a task-oriented act of communication Each of the instances we have related illustrates distortion due to inaccurate or incomplete perception of information, and each includes as well some failure to produce in message receivers a *desire* to move toward the solution of a problem in the recommended direction, a failure to persuade

Getting the job done in an organization depends upon the ability of its managers to create desire. Let us say that an employee under my supervision attempts to improve his job methods with the best of intentions but disastrous results I must communicate with him to correct the difficulty The easy part of my task is to acquaint him with other ways of doing his work, i e , inform him. The critical portion of my communication is that intended to build an active interest, even enthusiasm, in the employee If I succeed in the latter task, my recommendation becomes his preference If I fail to develop desire, no matter how clearly he understands what I would like to have him do, his implementation of change

will be less than satisfactory This is the "persuasion dimension" of interpersonal communication As good a definition as any for this particular interaction is "winning" the other man's "willing cooperation"

Undoubtedly, lack of interest in what he is doing reduces the productivity of the average worker more than any other factor If his job can be made exciting and rewarding to him, his achievement increases amazingly Pleasure in working and high productivity go hand in hand. Managerial communication can build interest and desire Truly, through persuasion we can tap America's richest resource, human motivation

In our analysis of organizational communication we consider persuasion to be prerequisite to other management skills In other words, the manager is unable to apply his knowledge and implement his programs without the ability to purposely influence the attitudes and behavior of those who work for him and with him His skill in persuasion enables him to "get things done through people"

Persuasion Is a Process

Many years ago Mark Twain assigned himself the task of discovering what made Americans different from other people After years of reading, observing, and deliberating he arrived at a fascinating generalization More than any other people in the world, Americans are preoccupied with *process!* More than any other people, Americans take things apart to see what makes them tick Though difficult to test, this observation has the ring of validity Perhaps our interest in process has caused the United States to be the first nation to study persuasion as a *process,* to locate its sequential steps, and to study them objectively Our schools and colleges are the first to place persuasion in the curriculum The University of Minnesota, for example, has three separate senior college-graduate level courses, and three graduate seminars in persuasion, and at the time of this writing approximately a dozen doctoral dissertations in persuasion have been completed at Minnesota alone Truly, we have found much to study in the process of persuasion, and the work has only begun

Jay Beecroft, director of Sales Training for 3M Corporation, relates this recent innovation in our schools to industry when he says, "The major obstacle confronting the modern business organization is its failure to realize that the process of persuasion can be *studied, analyzed,* and *consciously applied*" He adds that we tend to make noises to the effect that we are training in persuasion, but when the chips are down we react to persuasion or attempts to persuade by hunch, by instinct, off the tops of our heads! Beecroft suggests that if any company *really* trained its key personnel in what we now know about persuasion, that organization

would be so far ahead of the competition that the others would not be competition any more

Key Concepts

How does a person learn about persuasion and increase his ability to persuade? The first essential step is to assume the *process attitude,* to resolve that henceforth he will resist his impulse to "feel his way" in persuasion, and instead will detach himself and view what is going on as a process He should identify the steps in the process, classify stimuli, describe responses, and attempt to explain them *Being objective*—the first step toward learning about persuasion—is not easy, for all of us during most of our lives have avoided being systematic and analytical when initiating or experiencing acts of human influence

A key principle applies the process attitude to motivation *People do things for their reasons, not yours* When we recognize that persuasion consists of purposely connecting our recommendations to the OTHER PERSON'S motives, the importance of this becomes obvious

The force that prevents us from learning the other person's reasons (his motives) is within ourselves It is "The Pitfall of Projection" Without thinking about it, all of us project upon the other person our own habits, interests, goals, and desires Further, without realizing it, we tend to assume that the other person has experienced our experiences, that he has our vocabulary with the same meanings for words familiar to us, and that the facts we know so well are in his grasp

How can the "pitfall of projection" be avoided? Not by simple good intentions Often we hear, "You must put yourself in the other person's shoes" Realistically, this is entirely impossible, much more difficult than an actual exchange of footwear The other person is very different and incredibly complicated, the best we can do is to add up fragments of definite information about him, such as the words he uses and facts he must know

If we are diligent and sensitive, we may perhaps occasionally experience a flash of insight that amounts to "getting something of the other person's point of view" When this occurs his responses suddenly make sense, and what was mysterious becomes obvious It is a rich reward for our effort, and it affirms our resolution to be "other person centered"

The difference in our perception of communication made by one's gain of insight into the other person's view is always profound When we appreciate the other person's point of view, the situation changes considerably A cartoon best illustrates this It shows two rats in an experimental box One rat is saying to the other rat, "Boy, have I got this human trained! Whenever I push this lever, he gives me some food!"

Steps in the Process of Persuasion

Whenever persuasion is accomplished by anyone, anywhere, four tasks must be accomplished. Because these come in sequence we call them steps, or stages, in the process of persuasion. These are

1. Gain and maintain attention
2. Arouse selected desires (motives, habits, interests)
3. Connect desires to persuasive purpose
4. Produce a specific response

GAINING AND MAINTAINING ATTENTION

Obviously, attention must be gained before communication can take place. Step one underlines the word "maintain" for good reason. The necessity of *working at* the holding of attention throughout the duration of the message is *not* obvious to most of us. We forget the nature of human attention, which above all else is intermittent. We listen for 15 to 45 seconds typically, then let our mind wander. A bit later we tune in again, and depending upon what we hear, stay tuned in for either a longer or shorter interval than we did before. A trend develops toward listening more and more or less and less, whatever the case may be.

Our naive assumption that because a person pays attention when we begin to talk he will continue to do so is totally without foundation. The able persuaders employ carefully prepared devices to revive the attention of their listeners from time to time. Lively illustrations, examples, touches of humor, colorful language, all serve this purpose well. One main point is that attention does not "just happen." Purposeful effort and a variety of techniques are needed to do the job of maintaining attention.

AROUSING SELECTED MOTIVES

The important word in step two is "selected." The motive, habit, or interest to be activated in a person being persuaded is "selected" by as careful a motive analysis as time and circumstances permit. Much will be said later about motive analysis, the truly basic problem in the preparation of persuasion. The task confronting the persuader is that of finding what the person to be persuaded wants that is or can be related to the persuader's purpose. By "what he wants" we mean what he is interested in, what is important to him, what he finds exciting or rewarding. Once selected, the motive must be aroused, for most of the time the one to be

persuaded will not be aware of wanting or desiring anything related to the persuasion when the persuader comes along

Beware of the "pitfall of projection" while reviewing interests of another person Our own desires and preoccupations seem so "right" to us that we are inclined to assume that they are universal

The specific recommendation to be made by the persuader guides him in motive selection Can you show the person to be persuaded directly and simply *how* what you are suggesting will help him get what he wants, do what he enjoys doing, achieve a goal he has set for himself? If so, and you are sure the motive is his, not a projection of yours, the choice is probably a wise selection

CONNECTING MOTIVES TO PURPOSE

Step three, "connect desires to persuasive purpose," is frequently neglected because the persuader, having identified pertinent motives and having made his recommendation clear, figures that the job is done Nothing could be further from the truth People must be shown, explicitly and specifically, just exactly how a recommendation will serve their purposes and advance their interests

To do this "connecting" we recommend the device of "visualization." Visualization consists of picturing your proposal in action in the future, after its adoption and implementation Naturally, the one being persuaded will want to know "How will things work out?" In concrete terms, with vivid examples, the persuader talks of the future, describing in detail the probable effects of his proposal And always, the person to be persuaded is involved centrally in the visualization By means such as this, recommendations are unmistakably "connected" to desires

Here as in the next step it is necessary to be more explicit and detailed than most of us are habitually We trust people "to figure things out for themselves" to some extent When we misjudge the degree to which people are capable of doing this, the results are not always pleasant

PRODUCING THE SPECIFIC RESPONSE

Step four, "produce a specific response," is usually neglected even more than step three Too often, when we have gone through the first three steps we are ready to quit and go home If we do, we will regret it Human beings possess almost infinite capacity to do things the wrong way Whenever one permits a person who is "sold" on a general course of action to go ahead on his own and work out details of implementation, we can confidently anticipate disaster

To complete the process of persuasion successfully, much guidance is necessary in the last stage This is complicated by the nature of the required guidance, which may seem obvious and mechanical The one being persuaded may feel that he is being treated in a manner unworthy of his position and his intelligence He may say, "Don't you give me credit for figuring out *anything* by myself?"

Artistry in the execution of step four consists of suggesting details of implementation in such a way that the one we are persuading believes *he* is originating them This is done most readily through questions "How do you think we should get this started?" "Here's one thing we could do, but I'm not satisfied with it Can you improve it?" "What do you think of this procedure? Will it work?" Adopting a "team" approach—discussed later under formulas—with many leading questions permits the persuader to produce the specific response without insulting the intelligence of the other person

APPLYING THE FOUR STEPS

How should the reader apply the four-step process of persuasion? We suggest two ways as a guide to the preparation of persuasion, and as a diagnostic tool for the analysis of persuasion

Assume that you wish to submit a proposal to modify an important operation within your organization You are to present it to a three-executive committee that will evaluate your proposal and accept or reject it The plan you are recommending is in final form You have the evidence to support it

A good way to prepare your persuasive presentation is to plan how you will accomplish each of the four steps with this particular group of three people Ask yourself "How will I ?" and, in terms of these individuals on this given occasion, work out the *best* way to accomplish each step If you do this thoroughly, you will have a comprehensive and custom-built presentation It will be *complete* because it will have been designed psychologically to carry the listeners through a complete thought sequence to the acceptance and implementation of your proposal

As a diagnostic tool for the analysis of past and present persuasion, one can use the four steps in critical evaluation of his own persuasive efforts or the persuasion of others After an attempt to persuade, ask, "How well did I gain and maintain attention?" "How well did I *select* what was important to my audience and get those desires in motion?" "How well did I connect my proposal to what they were interested in?" "Could they see unmistakably how their needs would be met by my proposal?" And finally, "How effectively did I guide the final response?" Answers to these questions will, typically, indicate that one or two of the

steps were less well done than the others Conscious evaluation will aid a person to improve those weak points in future persuasion

Information Useful to the Study of Persuasion

Skill in persuasion is based upon knowledge of the human being and the resultant ability to predict his behavior, therefore we need to know all we can about people However, much content of the behavioral sciences is peripheral to our interest We find valuable information that is useful to the study in four sources motivational psychology, applied logic, semantics, and formulas for persuasion

PSYCHOLOGY OF MOTIVES

Motivation psychology sounds complicated and academic As implemented by the student of persuasion it can be made very direct and quite simple A person can become proficient in motive analysis by building two lists, one of the ways that people tend to resemble each other in their responses, and the other, ways in which they tend to differ Add items to your lists only when you are convinced that they are reliable and represent something significant

Knowledge about the similarities and differences in people comes from many sources Popular publications abound in articles that are helpfully informative Many books on motivation are available, several deal with people with an organizational background Courses are offered in psychology, we recommend particularly those relating to motivation And last, but not least, a person's own observation of himself and his associates can contribute items to the lists

We urge that the reader approach the study of motive analysis as a do-it-yourself project All of us have some knowledge and a great interest in "why people are the way they are " Build on this with *systematic* reading and observation and keep adding to the lists of similar and different patterns of behavior It is vital that you keep *written* lists, for if you trust your memory the potentially most penetrating insights may slip your mind and be forever lost

The system of motive analysis presented in a later chapter will serve as a guide to the building of the lists It will also provide a classification system that serves as a structure for motive analysis Long lists of motives tend to be of little use because what we want to remember is usually lost in a mass of items Our system places related motives together, and by doing so makes them more useful

APPLIED LOGIC

Applied logic is useful in improving the effectiveness of the reasoning we do in communication Most of the writing on persuasion does not sufficiently deal with the presentation of a logically justifiable case, nor does it propose procedures for good reasoning In the modern organization especially, people are not about to change their minds on important issues unless their better judgment approves the change Yet the "tricks of the trade" approach to persuasion gets center stage Although "gimmicks" and so-called psychological devices have some effect, we, as practical persuaders, must recognize that our first and probably most demanding task is to assist and survive the critical analysis of our proposal by those we wish to persuade

Recent research confirms the power of "facts of the case" persuasion Books on "how we think," training in problem-solving, games that teach the processes of logical reasoning, study and practices of briefing and outlining, all are useful in enabling us to produce better supported, more closely reasoned persuasion

We must warn the reader against assuming that motives and reasoning are separate or unrelated Actually, reasoning is often the best way of reaching a person's motives Applied logic is highly effective in accomplishing step three of the process of persuasion, for it can demonstrate convincingly the connection between a motive and a recommendation

The role played by logical reasoning in the process of persuasion may be represented realistically in this way

TO PERSUADE

1 Give good reasons, to
   a Arouse selected motives, and
   b Connect active motives to a persuasive proposition
2 Fire the imagination, to
   a Create excitement, and
   b Overcome inertia, and, thereby
   c Expedite change

BOTH ONE AND TWO ARE NECESSARY

Although the "good reasons" (these include all facts and their sound interpretation) can be exciting in themselves, it is likely that non-

logical devices will contribute relatively more to the firing of the imagination And to get people to move, mentally or physically, requires some form of excitement, in addition to intellectual conviction If we fail to get people *involved* they will probably never translate their good intentions into action

The study of language symbols and man's response to them can be called *semantics* In this sense of the term, semantics can contribute much to applied persuasion Subtle differences in word selection are often crucial to success or failure, such as the use of a neutral word instead of its emotive synonym The advice most helpful to us in designing language for persuasion is the previously mentioned basic principle of all communication, "People, not words, have meaning" In choosing our language we speculate about what our listener will perceive We ask ourselves what meanings he will read into our words and how he will respond to them We then formulate our message in symbols calculated to produce the desired response

Recognizing two distinctly different *kinds* of words helps the persuader to use language with greater precision and for increased effect To a given person, REPORT words are those that carry (predominantly) information, without overtones of like or dislike, acceptance or rejection To him certain other words and phrases are LOADED These, although accompanied by referential information, can trigger an acceptance or rejection response that may or may not be linked to the primary information conveyed People respond favorably or unfavorably to LOADED language To REPORT language they respond more thoughtfully, without immediate direction

In Chapter 11 we discussed inflammatory language as detrimental to good listening Hence it is not surprising that for maximum clarity in exposition REPORT words excel Failure in persuasion results from (1) use of words the persuader believes to be REPORT words but which, to the listener, are heavily LOADED, (2) use of intended *positively* LOADED language which turns out to be *negatively* LOADED to the listener, or vice versa, and (3) use of LOADED words for an intended effect, which the receiver interprets as REPORT language Each of these unforeseen responses can result either from faulty audience analysis or from careless attention to semantic considerations, or both

The notion that LOADING is determined in the mind of the person receiving the message is so often overlooked that we will illustrate the point If you label a proposal "radical" to indicate disapproval, intending NEGATIVE LOADING, it is entirely possible that Mr A may react to it as REPORT LANGUAGE, assuming that you meant simply to tell him that this is a little different from usual or routine proposals Mr B might well be attracted to the adjective "radical" because of his affection for offbeat,

novel ways of solving problems For him the term is POSITIVELY LOADED For Mr C it could be NEGATIVELY LOADED, due to strong rejection impulses springing from his hatred of "radical" political doctrines Loading—or the lack of it—for any word or phrase is obviously the product of the receiver's unique personal experiences

To what degree certain words are loaded depends on the context in which they are being used "Moron" is negatively loaded in lay conversation, but is report language in a discussion among psychologists Adjectives like "broad-minded" and "heroic" would seem to be positively loaded, but in the context of satire they take on negative connotations Most executives respond favorably to "profit," whereas many partisans of the Great Society take a dim view of any institution dedicated to "profit-making" activities Mastering the nuances of language is a fascinating assignment for anyone who would advance his command of the arts of persuasion

Two obstacles to proper communication are a matter of semantics ambiguity and vagueness Ambiguous statements can be interpreted in two or more possible senses by the listener Consequently, he may choose a meaning different from that intended Vague statements are those that do not clearly or precisely express the speaker's thoughts—no definite meaning emerges

Both ambiguity and vagueness are problems in organizational communication, but the former produces more spectacular results A report on a new vehicle states, "We cannot praise the brakes too much" One reader thinks this is total approval, another interprets it as an indication of serious deficiency An inspector tells the foreman, "The difference between specified tolerance and variations in this part are critical!" Replies the foreman, "The difference is *not* critical!" What does each *mean* by "critical"? The foreman means performance testing The inspector has in mind literal adherence to written, contractual specifications An employee asks, "Do I turn this knob to the left?" His instructor answers, "Right!" No intuition or deduction can help the employee to decide whether his instructor meant "Right, turn it left," or "No, turn it the other way"

The sender and receiver of messages should realize how prevalent ambiguities are so that they can be on guard against them How can this be accomplished? By checking the language against possible double meanings that could create potential confusion The receiver, by making an effort to detect as many meanings as possible for the same units of language, accepting what seems to fit best, and by asking questions to resolve those that are uncertain The sender, by *forcing* feedback to test the reception of his message When the receiver reveals what *he* thinks the sender said, ambiguities become obvious and are easily corrected Reduc-

ing ambiguous language to an absolute minimum should be a high priority item for any modern organization

Vagueness can be minimized by using simple concrete terms and relying more heavily on examples Instead of "substantial gain" state the definite amount and the base of comparison When a person asks for clarification of a vague statement he should use the magic question, "Will you give me an example to show what you mean?" Thinking up an instance of application in itself sharpens and refines an idea And because examples are specific and concrete they instill uniform meanings in the minds of people receiving the message

Precision in communication is achieved by using concrete terms in preference to relatively abstract equivalents Words the source might use to convey a thought may be visualized in an arrangement resembling the rungs on a ladder Those near the bottom represent tangible realities, objects, and situations that can be seen, touched, and heard These words are concrete We call them low-level abstractions because they have definite meanings, and are not very abstract At the top of the ladder are the high-level abstractions These words, like "honorable," "substantial," and "freedom," represent a host of possible interpretations Typically, these contribute vagueness to a unit of communication Abstract words convey "feeling tones" and "impressions" rather than a clear picture and factual information The moral of our ladder analogy is Come down to earth Almost always, the source will communicate more accurately (less vaguely) by using words that are as low as he can get on the ladder of abstraction

FORMULAS

"Formulas of Persuasion" involve psychology, reasoning, and language, yet are a distinctly separate source of information for the study of persuasion These are devices or techniques that have evolved through the ages from man's purposeful attempts to influence other men They have been tested in the pulpit, law court, politics, business, and family These techniques have been proved to work, and to ignore them would be to avoid empirically sound practice simply because it had not received a conventional development through theory We recognize that formulas are but a small part of the information necessary to an adequate understanding of persuasion Yet their value cannot be denied

During World War II a radio engineer was troubleshooting a receiver from a B-17 bomber He had removed it from its case and placed it on a test bench, the power was turned on His method of locating the malfunction was to go through the circuit diagram from antenna to headphones, noting possible causes of the symptoms shown by the re-

ceiver With his list of possibilities he could then use his instruments to find the one that needed repair While he was carrying out his time-consuming procedure, a friend who had the benefit of much practical troubleshooting experience came into the laboratory He watched a moment, then quickly approached the bench and felt of the metal tubes in turn, until he found a cold one The cold tube was replaced, the set functioned normally, and the friend advised, "When a radio stops playing—feel of the metal tubes!"

Formulas in persuasion are analogous to techniques like feeling the metal tubes in radio troubleshooting Mechanical recipes of this sort are but fragments of possibly useful information, but without them, time will be wasted and persuasion will proceed less efficiently

TEN BLOCKBUSTER FORMULAS OF PERSUASION AND HOW TO USE THEM

1 *The Yes-Response Technique*

Habits can be formed quickly For example, if we respond with "yes" to a series of questions we become more inclined to say "yes" to the next question A weak but measurable habit has been established Persuaders long ago learned to precondition an affirmative response in this way

It is no accident that the encyclopedia salesman, driving down the country road, looks at the wash line and at the mailbox Then he approaches the back door of the farmhouse, knocks, and a lady comes to the door "Mrs Jones?" "Yes" "Do you have children?" "Yes" "Are they of school age?" "Yes" "Do they have homework?" "Yes" "Is it sometimes necessary for them to go to the library to do their homework?" "Yes" "Wouldn't it be more convenient if they could do their homework at home, without going to the library?" "Yes"

This carefully planned series of yes-response questions causes Mrs Jones to be inclined to say "Yes" to the next question, which will probably be, "Could I leave my encyclopedia for a two week trial period, without obligation, to see how it works out with the children's homework?"

Many questions are asked in persuasion A little planning will point them in the same affirmative direction As a precautionary measure this may well tip the balance in favor of the persuader

Recently one of the authors encountered a skeptical 3M engineer who thought that the yes-response technique was too simple and obvious to be effective He was dickering for a used car, so he and a friend

prepared ten yes-response questions for the salesman They alternated as planned, getting ten consecutive affirmative answers Question number 11 was, "Will you take $100 less for the car?" The salesman answered, "Yes," and then added, "My God, what have I said?" The skeptical engineer admitted that he had been convinced

2 *Putting It Up to You*

Many of us neglect a most important aspect of persuasion, that is, to obtain frequent responses that let us know how our message is being received Are we being understood? Are we proceeding too rapidly or too slowly? Is the reaction predominantly positive or negative? Which parts of our presentation are attractive to the listener, and which are less than attractive? Answers to these questions are the essential feedback that permits us to adjust what we planned to do to what needs to be done

We "put it up to the other person" by asking a short response question, one which is easy, comfortable, and natural Examples are Is this clear? Am I making sense? Are you with me? Do you agree? Do you understand? Does this seem fair? If all is going well, answers tend to be quick affirmative monosyllables (Note the wording of the sample questions These can be used also to build a yes-response) If there is failure to understand, or if opposition is developing, responses will be hesitant and grudgingly affirmative or openly negative *This* the persuader needs to know, and the sooner the better Such information provides his only opportunity to revise on the spot and stop doing what is alienating or confusing the person to be persuaded

Because the skilled persuader has many forms of the putting-it-up-to-you question at the tip of his tongue he can secure frequent responses without seeming repetitious Questions are phrased so that responsibility for being clear, accurate, and fair lies squarely with the persuader, consequently, the listener can not infer any implications that the speaker feels he has limited ability from any question If the source seems genuinely concerned about being clear, fair, and sensible, the other person will rush to reassure him The listener will not be conscious of the questioner's purpose, which is to assess his reactions

Putting-it-up-to-you questions used well develop rapport, a feeling of friendly informality, and a dynamic involvement in the act of persuasion of the one being persuaded

3 *Simulated Disinterest*

At times the effectiveness of persuasion is increased if the persuader pretends not to care If the person we would persuade notices our

anxiety over the outcome, resistance to our persuasion increases Most people have had the experience of entering a retail store to purchase an article, being met by a salesman who tries aggressively to make a sale, and leaving without buying anything

A possible explanation is that the eager salesman reveals his vested interest by "pushing too hard" Until this occurs the customer is thinking about the article he might buy and his need for it Then, suddenly, he finds himself thinking about the salesman's commission Instead of helping the customer, the salesman is trying to help himself The customer "gets even" by punishing him with resistance

4 Transfer

Transfer is the process by which the surroundings of an act of persuasion, although not a part of the persuasion itself, influence the outcome For example The political candidate banks the stage with American flags, he opens the meeting by having his audience sing The Star-Spangled Banner, and pledge allegiance These things have nothing to do with what he says, but the people present listen more respectfully and remember better because of associated objects and ceremonies

The able persuader arranges for positive transfer An automobile dealer is unable to get well-educated and experienced salesmen to apply at his garage, so he runs a classified ad stating that he will be in a suite in the Curtis Hotel between 2 00 and 4 00 P M on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons with an unusual opportunity for well-educated and experienced salesmen The suite does not change the job description, but more than a dozen appropriately qualified men are led to apply through *transfer*

Transfer includes what precedes and what follows an act of persuasion And it can be as simple as offering a person a comfortable chair!

Negative transfer results when the surroundings interfere with the process of persuasion Typically, modern organizations tolerate negative transfer Key interviews are conducted in noisy surroundings, with frequent interruptions Complicated proposals are introduced to a harassed executive at the end of a hectic, tiring day Glaring lights, uncomfortable temperature, awkward seating arrangements, visual aids poorly placed, public address systems that hum, squeal, and distort, we could make an almost endless list Only planned attention to details like these can avoid negative transfer and promote positive transfer

5 Bandwagon Technique

People are predictably alike in their desire to follow along with others in any current trend If the persuader can show that what he recom-

mends is becoming the thing to do, he has begun to break down resistance to his proposal Everyone wants to climb on the bandwagon and join the parade

All ages respond to the bandwagon appeal, but young people are relatively more sensitive to it than are their elders Teenagers quite inflexibly follow the fashions and activities of their peers If it is not the style to wear parka hoods up, they will stay down, even in sub zero weather

No one is immune to "bandwagon," though many of us think we are If you believe that you have conquered the desire to follow the crowd, try to recall the time when two or three of your neighbors bought new cars Did you think about possibly trading for a new automobile? If so, you were influenced by the bandwagon appeal

Bandwagon can be incorporated in many, perhaps a majority, of acts of persuasion, if it is treated as a subordinate theme Formulas of persuasion are not all mutually exclusive In fact, they have cumulative effect The more different formulas you use, the greater the impact It is well worthwhile to examine every proposal you intend to advance in search of a bandwagon theme, a developing trend or popular acceptance that can be woven into the fabric of your persuasive presentation

6 *Say It with Flowers*

We are indebted to Elmer Wheeler, once recognized by the United States Chamber of Commerce as America's Number One Salesman, for this metaphorical wording of the proven fact that flattery will, indeed, aid persuasion One of the exciting traits we share is the ability to listen to nice things being said about ourselves for a long time without tiring or becoming bored Ivar Krueger, the Swedish Match King, in the late twenties ably phrased this truth when he said, "You can flatter someone until you are ashamed of yourself, but never enough to make him ashamed of himself" Krueger was an eloquent cynic He defined "gratitude" as "the feeling you have that you can get more from the same source"

Flattery is easily overdone Certainly, insincere praise for purposes of persuasion has little to commend it. But this positive side of "saying it with flowers" is paying the deserved compliment People in our culture are self-conscious about praising a person to his face, even though he has earned an accolade Telling people about the worthwhile things they have done, congratulating them when they merit the congratulations, can be good for both parties involved We do not do enough of this "reinforcing" kind of communication We recommend that when favor-

able recognition of achievement can be built into a unit of persuasion with accuracy and sincerity that it be done Perhaps you will wish to think of it as "favorable recognition" rather than "flattery" If so, fine, but flattery or not, what makes it wholesome—and effective—is honesty

7 *Don't Ask If, Ask Which*

Again we use the colorful phrasing of Elmer Wheeler to convey the excellent advice that the persuader should, whenever possible, offer the listener the choice of *something* or *something else,* never the choice of *something* or *nothing* If two or three alternatives are recommended as possibilities, the listener tends to direct his attention to the selection of the best possibility If a single possibility is recommended, he will think of accepting it or rejecting it

Wheeler tells the classic story of how during the depression Walgreen Drug Stores "pushed" eggs in malted milks Eggs were ten cents a dozen, and the prospect of selling a malted with an egg and charging five cents more was attractive So Walgreen's sent out a memo to all their soda fountains, "Push eggs in malted milks" A customer would come in and order a malted The clerk would say, "Would you like an egg in it?" The customer would answer, "No," and eggs were not selling

After Walgreens consulted with Wheeler, things were different The customer would order his malted, and the clerk would pick up two eggs, one in each hand, and ask, "Would you like one egg or two in your malted milk?" The startled customer would choose the cheaper alternative, say, "One," and hundreds of thousands of eggs were sold in malted milks

The "which, not if" technique has wider application than to simple, mechanical choices, like one or two eggs Actually it serves well to precipitate decision A lady shopping for a new dress shows her interest in a particular style and fabric The clerk asks, "Do you prefer the blue or the gray?" The customer may find she has committed herself to a buying decision by simply stating her preference for a color

The "which, not if" procedure is also suited to proposals of considerable complexity A recommendation to modify a production line or manufacture a new product may be presented in two forms (occasionally in three or four) that have some differences in detail but are both (or all) acceptable to the persuader He is in a strong psychological position when he can say, "Here are two plans Either will do the job I honestly don't know which I prefer Which do you think is better?" His audience will feel the impulse to help him decide and may never perceive the possibility of rejecting *both* approaches

8 The Swap Technique

Bill Gove, a noted sales consultant and popular public speaker, recommends the swap technique as a means of persuasion He explains that it creates a specific interpersonal relationship, one in which the persuader does something to help the one he is persuading, who then reciprocates They "swap" favors As a result they find themselves working on a project together, as a team Communication is facilitated, cordiality abounds, and persuasion is painlessly performed

As with preceding formulas, "swap" is found in both simple and complicated forms The Fuller Brush man who begins by giving the housewife a sample brush, and the industrial salesman who opens an interview by saying, "I have an idea for you," are establishing a simple exchange Accepting the sample or the idea implies an obligation to listen to the sales "pitch" Considerably more complex is the "swap" relationship between the automobile salesman and the customer, when they work together to concoct a deal that will be accepted by the sales manager The salesman "seems" to be on the side of the customer, trying to get him the car he wants at a low price, if necessary doing battle with the unreasonable sales manager to achieve this end

The swap technique is basic to the currently popular "participative management" The manager uses group activities to involve his employees in the running of their organization He helps them with their problems, they help him with suggestions, and together, the team moves ahead Done skillfully, participative management has many advantages Morale is high Human resources are better utilized than under authoritarian methods People tend to be more productive and to work harder as team members than as individuals told to accomplish a task

"Swap" can be applied to the language used in directing behavior, also Basically, a manager can issue a request to an employee in two contrasting ways He can say, "Will you do this for me?" If he does, several things happen He places himself at the center of interest, where the job should be. He maximizes the status differential between himself and the employee, and he causes the employee to review their past relations to determine *how much he wants* to do for the boss, if anything The result is usually a partial effort

Or, the manager can say, "Will you help us get this job done?" This phrasing minimizes the status differential He places the job at center stage And he appeals to a universal desire to work with people as a team, to accomplish a worthwhile task As we saw in Chapter 6, the appeal of group pressure often moves people to action Output is likely to be increased, and, certainly, the employee will be happier in his work

"Swap" is one of the more adaptable and widely applicable formulas "Making a team" is a good way to get things done Ways of building teamwork in certain kinds of persuasion—such as selling a suggestion to your boss—may not be obvious, but effort and ingenuity can almost always devise a mutual helping relationship

9 Reassurance

A second suggestion must be credited to Bill Gove namely, *reassurance* as a technique of persuasion It differs from other formulas in that it is a postoperative procedure Gove claims that when a persuader causes another person to believe something or do something he would not otherwise do or believe, the persuader is responsible for the change He can discharge part of that responsibility by helping the one being persuaded to adjust to his new attitude This consists mainly of *reassuring* him Reassurance involves reminding him of the wisdom of his decision and helping him live happily with his new belief, activity, or product And as Gove adds, with reference to salesmen, this technique is effective for repeat sales

The need for reassurance comes from uncertainties that follow being persuaded The person who has been persuaded is not at all sure that he made a wise choice He is filled with persistent, nagging doubts Just recall the last time you bought an automobile. Were you confident you had bought the right car, or made the best possible deal? The mature, ethical persuader will carefully reassure the persuaded one after the decision is made, and thereby cause doubts to abate

The person who accepts a new position always needs—but seldom gets—reassurance One employer used to persuade a prospect to join his organization by every means telephone, telegraph, letter As soon as consent was given, he sent the new employee a W-2 form, and promptly forgot him

When he learned about reassurance he behaved differently After the prospect agreed to take the job, he would wait a week, then send him a letter beginning "Dear So-and-So I think you made a wise decision in coming to work with us Here are the reasons that is true " A week or so later he would send another letter "Dear So and-So We're looking forward to having you with us We are a friendly crew, and I think you will enjoy it here By the way, here are some things you might like to know about your assignment " The letter ended " see you on such and such a date Sincerely yours "

This executive is admittedly a prejudiced source, but he claims that the people he hired without reassurance were apprehensive when

they came to work and took some time to settle down and become productive Those who had received the letter of assurance came into the organization relatively relaxed As the employer put it, "They were bright-eyed and bushy-tailed, ready to go to work" He continued, "The time I spent writing letters of reassurance probably paid my company greater dividends than equivalent time devoted to any of my other activities"

10 Technique of Irritation

Analysis of persuasion in action in the United States and abroad reveals that carefully controlled irritation is one of the strategies most frequently used to induce people to make desired decisions As a persuasive technique, "irritation" consists of applying an unpleasant stimulus, creating a condition uncomfortable to the person to be persuaded by "rubbing it in" until he almost—but not quite—crosses the threshold of explosion

The actions of children often provide the perfect example of a simple form of "irritation to persuade" Who has not heard a youngster repeat his request for an ice cream cone over and over again until the parent finally breaks down and permits him to buy it?

A classic case of irritation to persuade is the nagging wife *Repetition* over a period of time is often her most effective way of using the technique of irritation A wife who wants a fur coat may find that mentioning it to her husband several times a day for a few months is the best persuasion possible We assume she understands her husband's "threshold of explosion" and that everyday she causes him to approach it but *never* permits him to cross it

Clever persuaders irritate their prospects so ingeniously that their intent to annoy is never suspected One of the authors was approached by a publisher's representative who wished to replace a course textbook with one his company published Although this book was a little better for the course than the current text, it still was not quite what the professor wanted, he turned his attention to other matters

Once or twice a week the publisher's agent would "drop in" to chat with the professor for a few minutes and would briefly mention his book The professor finally noted a pattern in these casual visits They always took place during the ten-minute period before class, a period a college professor uses to make his essential preparations for this particular class When he hears the class bell he realizes that class time is ten minutes hence, and sets about assembling his notes and his thoughts An interruption at this time has the effect of irritation

Suddenly it occurred to the professor that he had *almost* decided to adopt the persuader's book! This had come about subconsciously, and it amounted to accepting the persuader's recommendation as a means of removing the irritation of his well-timed, apparently congenial visits As soon as the persuader understood what was happening *at a conscious level,* he terminated the irritation (ended the visits) by announcing to the agent his final decision *not* to adopt the book

Summary Comments on Formulas

We will conclude our discussion of ten selected formulas of persuasion with three comments

1 The formulas are not simple mechanical procedures Potentially, they are devices of substantial sophistication To be effective they should be used with creative imagination They must be adapted to purpose, situation, persuader, and "persuadee" with sensitivity, even artistry

2 Formulas operate subconsciously If you as the one to be persuaded *identify* a formula being used by the persuader, all of its effectiveness is lost Hence the persuader who uses formulas will try to prevent his listeners from becoming aware of formula devices per se

3 Formulas are sufficiently attractive that some of us will come to rely upon them excessively This is the FORMULA FALLACY, i e , assuming that formulas alone will do the job of persuasion They are useful as supplementary and incidental devices The major problems of persuasion are better solved by application of principles derived from individual psychology, social interaction, and the process of communication

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Logical and Nonlogical Persuasion

CHAPTER 14

The previous chapter noted that writers on persuasion have tended to stress irrational elements and neglect the role of critical thinking, or, if one prefers, common sense We asserted that making sense is an essential part of persuasion, a prerequisite to conviction in many instances In this chapter we dig more deeply into the logical and nonlogical factors and probe their interrelationship

As we observe people involved in persuasion it becomes obvious that we need to understand *emotion* All people are "creatures of emotion" to varying degrees They frequently persuade and react to persuasion emotionally Their behavior when they are emotional is drastically different from their action when they are calm, free from emotion. What is (or are) emotion(s)? What effects does emotion have on the human being?

To provide answers to these questions we will skip lightly over many years of arduous study and thousands of experiments The great turning point in our thinking about emotion came when behaviorist psychologists joined forces with physiological chemists The behaviorists had become dissatisfied with long lists of *names* of emotions, which were little more than terms roughly describing how people behaved in situations of stress To locate the basic or primary emotions the behaviorists

looked to "native" behavior, the unlearned activities of which an infant is capable Babies were tested to find the range of their emotional responses Loss of support, a loud noise, or a pin prick would cause general agitation and disorganization This was termed the primary "fear" emotion Restricting the child's movement by holding its arms and legs resulted in agitation and vigorous struggling efforts This was basic "rage" emotion Cuddling and stroking the infant produced a total response that seemed designed to perpetuate the stimulus This was called the elementary, or basic, "love" emotion

Observers agreed that these three basic emotions in primary or elaborated form differed considerably from one another The next question to be answered was, How do these differ internally? The physiological chemists were called in and they attached their electrodes, gauges, wires, and pipes They confirmed the belief that emotion is an aroused condition, for with the onset of any emotion great changes were found to occur in endocrine secretion, heartbeat, breathing, etc The surprising discovery was that, internally, all emotions looked alike Whether a person feels rage or love or fear, the same internal modifications take place The physiological chemist had no difficulty in describing and identifying an emotional condition, but his problem was that he had no way of distinguishing one emotion from another

Adult emotions are probably learned elaborations of the basic innate emotions, fear, rage, and love Many psychologists prefer to speak of an EMOTIONAL CONDITION, with overlaid learned behavior patterns to express it appropriately, according to environment and circumstances This interpretation led us to phrase an earlier question "What is (are) emotion(s)?" Our view is that the presence or absence of an emotional condition is important to persuasion and that the major distinctions we need to make among patterns of emotional behavior are those derived from the basic emotions, rage, love, and fear We know when an emotion is present because of physical changes Expression of that condition is learned behavior and as such varies widely from person to person

THE EMOTIONAL CONDITION

Although we express emotion(s) differently, there are three characteristics of the emotional state that are universal and important to persuasion Any emotion produces these symptoms, and the more pronounced the emotion, the more severe these manifestations become The symptoms are *shock, diffusion,* and *transference*

The Consequences of Becoming Emotional

Any emotional person is in a state of shock. This does not mean that he is unconscious and rigid, but that to some degree he has lost rationality. His critical thinking ability is lowered. A slight emotion costs only a small sacrifice in judgment, but a strong emotion may leave him unable to solve any but the simplest problems.

Diffusion is a physical phenomenon, in which gross, general physical activity replaces selective, smaller movements. The emotionally aroused individual reacts from head to toe with (1) more movement than necessary and (2) larger movements than needed. Energy is dissipated prodigally, as when a frightened person nervously paces a room.

Transference is a psychological manifestation in which the effects of the emotion spread out over objects and people that have no logical connection with the emotion. It "spills over," touching innocent bystanders. When Bill Johnson was "bawled out" by Henry Wolfson he called a meeting of his subordinates and laid down the law. Or, in the spring the indifferent student who had fallen in love over the weekend comes to class on Monday and bids the professor a cheerful "Good morning" (the first time this ever happened) and is friendly and helpful to everyone. His well-being, produced by love emotion, changes his behavior toward people who are not involved in any logical way with the emotion itself.

It takes an appreciable period of time to "work up" an emotional condition. The time lag is caused by the slowness with which our glands change their pattern of secretion and for other necessary physical changes to come about. We have all had the experience of passing through a crisis with calmness and poise—a close call in an automobile, perhaps—only to "go to pieces" afterward. An insult may produce slight immediate response, but as we think about it and our adrenalin secretes, our heart beats faster, our breathing becomes faster and deeper, we are able to attain impressive heights of rage emotion a few minutes—or an hour—later. Conversely, time is required for emotion to subside. Do not expect an aroused associate to shed his emotional condition when he steps into another room and relates to other people working on a different task. His behavior in the new context may puzzle us, for commonly we fail to recognize the persistence of emotion.

Here we must call attention to the dangers of creating an emotional condition for purposes of persuasion. We often hear a manager say, "Guess I better shake Joe up. If I threaten to fire him, get him scared enough, he may get on the ball." Or, "Pete isn't putting out. If I get him mad at Ed, he will try to beat him for the production award." Is this approach to be recommended? Does it usually produce satisfactory results?

Assuming that rage or fear has been deliberately produced in a man, the consequences may be less than satisfactory because of the "side effects" of his emotional condition. The angry or fearful man shows transference, that is, he may act aggressively to everything and everybody around him to relieve his tensions. He exhibits diffusion, loses the ability to make precise, selective movements, and wastes energy in large, inappropriate physical activities. And perhaps most detrimental of all, he is in a state of shock. He is unable to think clearly and objectively. The misguided manager expects the man he has purposefully angered to retain his good judgment and common sense. Expecting an aroused person to make rational decisions is supremely unrealistic. The situation is aggravated by the tendency of the wrought-up person to *want* to decide important matters. Most of us feel a drive to settle issues while we are excited. The emotional condition often prevents our recognizing the desirability of postponing decision until we are calm and our rationality has been restored. It is as though we say to ourselves, "I must hurry and make this important decision while I'm still upset!"

As a general procedure, getting people into an emotional state to facilitate persuasion is not to be recommended, although we do recognize that there are times when it is necessary. The wise persuader uses the technique sparingly and as a last resort. He estimates possible consequences from shock, transference, and diffusion and avoids exposing the aroused person to situations requiring critical judgment and immediate decision.

Effect of Emotion on the Organization

Having explained the characteristics of the emotional state and its effects upon the individual, what can we conclude about the consequences emotion has on the organization as a whole? Other things being equal, the organization in which the emotional condition is kept to a minimum is more productive. Unnecessary emotion inevitably means a waste of human resources.

How can people in an organization be kept unemotional? Obviously, not all of them will remain calm all the time. But much can be done to eliminate many of the causes of unnecessary emotion. Enlightened management can discourage the use of fear and rage as tools of persuasion. Open channels of communication, by supplying information and permitting upward communication, can prevent misunderstandings that upset people. Trivial circumstances often disturb persons profoundly, but because such incidents seem insignificant, they are not corrected. A good example might be the delay in the arrival of the bimonthly pay-

check The average person tends to become angry when he cannot be sure that he will be paid at the designated time

Another instance of wasteful emotion with insufficient cause is the case of the executive secretary and the new clerk typist Velma had hired a very young, attractive, bright, and efficient typist, Lorraine Lorraine's problem was that she could never get to work *quite* on time Velma issued repeated reprimands, then shifted to warnings and threats Lorraine seemingly tried to get up earlier and be on duty at 8 00 A M but actually made little improvement

After a month, Velma's patience was gone At 7 50 she began watching the clock, muttering, "I wonder what time that girl will come this morning" By 7 59 she was mildly angry, and when 8 05 or 8 10 arrived without Lorraine, Velma had generated a towering rage When Lorraine tripped in, with or without an alibi, Vilma would scold and sulk Frequently it was 10 30 or 11 00 A M before her emotional condition had subsided to the point that she could fully devote herself to the work at hand What a tremendous waste, even if we ignore the reciprocal emotion Velma produced in Lorraine!

Helping people keep as calm as possible is not high on the official list of duties of management But the manager who concerns himself about this objective and attains it, will be substantially rewarded by productive effort of his employees

Emotion and Motivation Are Not the Same

When the word "emotion" is loosely used it is often improperly substituted for another useful term "motive" The classic misuse, found frequently in current writings about communication, is "emotional appeal" Writers and teachers often label messages "emotional appeal" when they mean "motive appeal" If we use our terminology precisely, the proper use of "emotional appeal" would be limited to messages that are intended to produce in the receiver shock, diffusion, and transference

Motives are discussed in considerable detail in the next two chapters, but to establish commonsense distinction between emotion and motivation here we need only mention that a person's motives are his needs, interests, desires, habits, and goals These operate to direct a person's energy toward the object of interest, but do not imply that he is generally aroused or upset Our motivation gets us interested in an idea or a proposal, such interest is entirely different from a state of psychological and physiological agitation

Motives operate in the presence or absence of the emotional condi-

tion These are independent variables, acting to influence behavior singly or in combination

How Feelings and Emotions Are Related

At this point many readers will be skeptical about our treatment of emotions No doubt, they will think that emotions can be constructive, driving people to accomplish great things Are not emotions needed to get the job done? The authors answer, no, emotions are not needed, but appropriate FEELINGS are

The difference between a feeling that helps the individual and the group and an emotional condition that handicaps them is clarified by listing ten feelings which, normally, involve *no* emotion

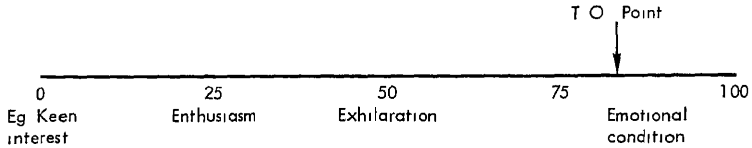
1	euphoria	6	alarm
2	enthusiasm	7	reverence
3	keen interest	8	exhilaration
4	nostalgia	9	patriotism
5	depression	10	anticipation

Briefly, a feeling "tones up" a person without producing shock, diffusion, or transference So the football coach who prepares his team for the game is not trying to get them to be emotional Does he want his quarterback to be in a state of shock, to be physically uncontrolled (diffusion) and through transference to react with rage to his teammates? What he does hope to generate in his players are feelings of enthusiasm, anticipation, even euphoria Feelings like these can focus energy on the task and result in increased efficiency Emotion dissipates and expends that energy wastefully

Feelings and emotions may overlap There is an overlapping area where a feeling may become so intense that an emotional condition occurs If our football coach overstimulates his team, they may go on the field enraged or afraid Their ability to execute their intricate plays, and their intelligent flexibility in diagnosing and countering the opponents' attack will be reduced Being "toned up" but avoiding an emotional condition requires a delicate balance Fran Tarkenton, a National Football League quarterback, reflecting about a football game he played with the Minnesota Vikings put it this way

> We were up for this game, but I don't believe we play our best football when we play at a high emotional level When we don't become so emotionally involved, we play better

A scale that relates emotions and feelings The relationship of feeling and emotion can be represented by a "degree of involvement" scale



As one example of an increase in involvement we can imagine a person—perhaps a sensitive athlete—proceeding from keen interest through enthusiasm and exhilaration to a "take-off point" where a generally aroused and upset condition occurs The aim of the game for the leader, be he manager, political organizer, teacher, or football coach is to strike the balance between appropriate strong constructive feelings and the excess involvement that causes the destructive emotional condition

INTRAPERSONAL CHANNELS OF PERSUASION

When we deliberately center the study of persuasion upon the receiver of the messages, we imply that our most challenging problems will be those of understanding what in him will help to determine his reactions We may say that any system of analysis must be RESPONSE-CENTERED The ultimate test of an attempt to persuade is the response of the receiver Does the change in belief or action resulting from persuasion resemble what the persuader wished to bring about? To the extent that the persuader's intent becomes reality he has succeeded Predicting the response of a particular person or persons at a specified time becomes the goal of highest priority What one can *predict,* one can increasingly *control*

The Process of Persuasion Diagramed

Let us here introduce what we believe to be the best diagrammatic representation of the process of persuasion The schematic is response-oriented, yet it relates all factors contributing to response and shows their respective roles

The diagram represents a time sequence, from left to right Obviously it takes *time* for an input to trigger perceptions, and further time must elapse for a response to occur

THE INPUT STAGE

The alternative stimuli in the diagram are the input paths of "reasoned discourse" and "suggestion" Arrows on the left show that the

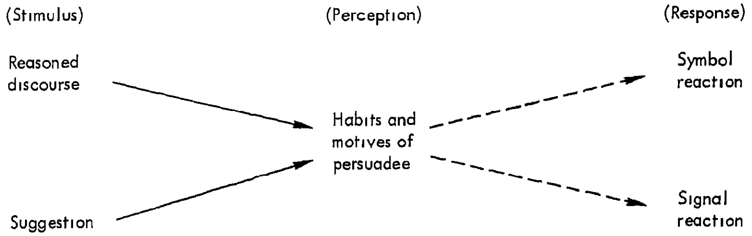


Figure 10 Channels of Persuasion

destination of the two categories of stimulation is the same Whether the persuader chooses to "reason" or "suggest," his necessary and ultimate purpose must be to attach his recommendation to the habits and motives of the person he would persuade Reasoned discourse is "logical persuasion" and suggestion is the equivalent of "nonlogical persuasion"

PERCEIVING THE STIMULI

At the perception stage meaning is "read into" the message by the person to be persuaded From his storehouse of experiences he selects analogies, literal and figurative, which translate the incoming stimuli into something that makes sense, *for him* Here his interpretations begin to harmonize or conflict with the forces which energize his behavior, his habits, interests, desires, goals, the complex array of potential pushes and pulls we term "motivation" If the interaction is harmonious, he finds himself becoming more favorably disposed toward the persuader and the message If conflict develops between perceptions and motives, some degree of dissonance results

TWO KINDS OF RESPONSE

Response to a unit of communication is either delayed and thoughtful (symbol) or relatively immediate and uncritical (signal) The dotted arrows "suggest" that while a communicator normally expects symbol response to *intended* reasoned discourse, his expectations may not be realized Similarly, one expects a signal reaction to *intended* suggestion But people, alone and in groups, persist in surprising persuaders Occasionally, perhaps frequently, a unit carefully designed to trigger quick "signal" response is pondered at length by its listeners Intended reasoned discourse may produce signal response The consciously competent persuader always allows for these possibilities.

Intent of the Persuader vs Response of the Receiver

Neither suggestion nor reasoned discourse occur alone Any message to persuade has some of both However, in most instances a persuader will choose to place predominant reliance upon one or the other Either he will attempt to achieve an overall thoughtful, symbolic reaction or a response that is, in the main, immediate and uncritical He *intends* a certain balance of the two

Whatever the persuader's intent, human audience response remains the final criterion that tells us which of the two intrapersonal paths conveyed his appeal to the listener's motive center If you use a syllogism in an effort to reason with someone, and he gives a signal response to it, *for him* it was suggestion And, whatever he reacts to with a symbol response is *for him* reasoned discourse Since meaning is perception, we accept reaction as more significant than intent

REASONED DISCOURSE AS PERSUASION

If a message source resolves to place major reliance upon logical persuasion—the intrapersonal input of reasoned discourse—he will in the main set about doing two things He will (1) present evidence and build his argument upon it, and (2) he will "encourage sober second thought" by revealing the links in his chain of reasoning and by helping the audience to subject everything he says to critical review

Advantages of Reasoned Discourse

There are many reasons why thoughtful persuasion appeals to the receiver For example, reasoned discourse has some suggestive effect, and produces some positive signal response We all consider ourselves critical thinkers and we have pride in our problem solving abilities When someone urges us to reason through a problem with him, we are flattered and tend to react favorably In this sense, reasoning to persuade has a universal appeal

The effect of reasoned discourse is more lasting than that of suggestion When we have tested a proposal thoroughly and accepted it because of its soundness, we tend to cling to it firmly Experiments show that attitude changes from suggestion are just as great as those from

reasoned discourse, but less stable Typically, regression, or movement toward the original position, takes a certain amount of time People convinced by evidence and reasoning not only retain the change with little loss but sometimes as time goes on an increment occurs Apparently, they mentally review their thinking, and if it still seems sound, their faith in the conclusion is increased

A significant advantage of reasoned discourse over suggestion appears when persuasion must be attempted under conditions of conflict When people are in firm disagreement, opinions of parties to the dispute are seldom modified by nonlogical techniques All the formulas in the world will not cause a person to give ground on a well-thought out specific issue The main effect of suggestion, for example, loaded words, is to deepen the disagreement and make it more permanent

If minds of the disputants are to be changed, it will come about because of exposure to facts and reasoning they do not know, or have not completely explored Consequently, when persuasion is a matter of reducing conflict, resorting to nonlogical methods is usually a mistake The best way to work out a compromise is through factual, deliberate, and reflective analysis

Finally, the strongest argument for relying upon reasoned discourse in persuasion whenever possible is the fact that it produces better decisions Man has progressed not because of his ability to sway others by tricks and short-circuit methods, but because he thought about his problems, individually and collectively, with objectivity and deliberation The smaller the part played by both emotion and suggestion in decision making, the wiser that decision will be Persuading through use of the receiver's critical thinking abilities helps to insure the social utility of the outcome of the persuasion

PERSUASION VIA SUGGESTION

A wealth of implications are contained in the familiar truism, "Man is the suggestible animal" He often abandons his judgment and pursues a will-o'-the-wisp impulse He may at times *prefer* intuitive insights to results of disciplined studies He sometimes obeys without hesitation a foolish command from a respected source and ignores wise admonitions from an individual he dislikes These and other tendencies, annoying to many of us when we find them in mature people, rest upon the keystone of all suggestibility *Belief is the normal, natural response*

Unless we have trained ourselves in the habits of skepticism it is easy for us to accept what we are told without question Doubting takes

effort and energy When hypnosis stills our doubting mechanism the natural state is laid bare We see, feel, taste, and do what is suggested to us When not under hypnosis we follow suggestion in the same way but to a lesser degree So we speak of the persuader who uses suggestion as "bypassing the critical faculties (doubting mechanisms) in an effort to obtain a signal response" Persuasion via suggestion, when it works, is "push-button control of behavior," or as close as we can get to it through the symbolic medium of language

Two Methods of Using the Intrapersonal Channel of Suggestion

Direct suggestion is explicit It states clearly the desired response *Indirect suggestion* is less obvious It hides its true purpose, simply or subtly It is well-named because the purpose of indirect suggestion is never openly stated but must always be inferred A wide range of subtlety characterizes indirect suggestion Its purpose may be so obvious that it literally cannot be misunderstood, or it may be so hidden that it challenges even the more thoughtful and interested listeners Being subtle does not make your suggestion indirect, what does is the fact that you do not state the goal of your persuasion in so many words, outright

How direct suggestion is used in persuasion Direct suggestion is a matter of simply telling the persuader what to do or believe, as directly and simply as possible, without explanation or reasons Unless some counterforce opposes the suggestion, a natural belief response takes over and the suggestion is accepted, *without conscious deliberation*

Let us say you are motoring through western South Dakota on a hot July afternoon You have driven 100 miles since your last stop You are tired and hungry as you enter a tiny village A sign in front of a restaurant screams at you "EAT" You slow and head toward the curb A small sign in the restaurant window adds a second, reinforcing suggestion "AIR CONDITIONED" Without thinking about either sign, perhaps without consciously perceiving them, you stop, go into the restaurant, and order a hamburger and a cup of coffee

The "EAT" message is concise direct suggestion "AIR CONDITIONED" as a message to you is indirectly suggestive It does not say, "If you come in, you can cool off," although that inference is obvious Because your reaction was unthinking, actually a matter of habit, it is a relatively pure signal response, indicating that for you on this occasion the two signs *were* suggestion, not reasoned discourse

Repeated direct suggestion "adds up" in the nervous system Just telling a person that something is true, over and over, day after day, may cause him to believe it *How* this cumulative effect comes about is not entirely clear, but the fact that it does happen is undisputed The companies that tell us in their advertising to "Buy Buick," "Smoke Luckies," and "Fly Northwest" week after week and year after year are using a proven method Of course they supplement it with indirect suggestion to reinforce the direct message "Buick is the Tuned Car," "It's Luckies, two to one," "Northwest—the Fan Jet Airline"

REPETITION AS INDIRECT SUGGESTION

Repetition in itself is a technique of indirect suggestion It is one we fail to exploit in our daily persuasion We tend to feel that when a person has been told something once, that should be enough He should remember the message Also, we are reluctant to repeat ourselves, fearing to sound absentminded or senile From the other person's point of view, however, a repetition may be much appreciated because initially he may not have absorbed the idea With the second and third repetition the notion loses its strangeness It begins to seem familiar and attractive Perhaps the secret of using repetition to advantage in face-to face persuasion is this Do it often, but each time you repeat, modify the language a little Retain enough of the former wording to make it sound familiar, but vary it enough to avoid sounding like a broken record The skilled persuader strengthens his suggestion and achieves further repetition through engaging in dialogue in such manner that the listener repeats the key ideas, either as stated by the persuader or in his own words

POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE SUGGESTION

Direct suggestion occurs in two forms, and one is more useful than the other *Positive suggestion* tells a person to do or believe something, whereas *negative suggestion* tells a person *not* to do or believe something As psychologists say, suggestion is strongest at its positive pole

A mother can tell her young son, "Come home immediately after school" or "Don't go skating with your friends when school is out" The manager can say, "Please have that report in by 5 00 o'clock" or "Don't forget to fill out that report" The political candidate can say, "Support my program to lower taxes" or "Don't be misled by my opponent's claim that he can both reduce your taxes and increase the city's operating budget"

The positive form of direct suggestion presents a single idea

which, if unopposed, leads to the desired belief or action The negative form suggests another incompatible possibility which at best diverts attention from the recommendation and at worst may make it more attractive than was intended by the persuader The classic illustration of this fallacy in negative suggestion is the mother's advice to her two-year-old, "Don't put beans up your nose"

THE FORMS AND USES OF INDIRECT SUGGESTION

Perhaps the most adventuresome form of indirect suggestion is one that is popularly—but improperly—called "reverse psychology" Its correct name is *countersuggestion* The method consists of recommending the opposite of what you wish the listener to do or to believe When a persuader uses countersuggestion he should have reason to predict that unusual circumstances and personality traits will combine to create a probability that the receiver will *want* to go against the persuader's recommendation

The central factor making such a prediction logical is the personality structure of the one to be persuaded There are "countersuggestible" people, persons whose usual reaction pattern is to resist advice and move in a contrary direction These few obstinate souls can sometimes be influenced by countersuggestion when all else fails

However, there is danger in making countersuggestions because they may be taken at face value A teen-age boy who most of the time was reliably countersuggestible, at least in relation to his parents, brought home a nice-looking but extremely stupid girl His father decided to cleverly influence the lad in order to nip the romance in the bud He casually observed to his son, "I liked the girl you had here last night If I were you I wouldn't let her get away" The boy listened thoughtfully, and took his father's advice

All of us have some tendency to countersuggestibility We find ourselves in situations, usually when competition is involved, that cause us to respond vigorously when a challenge is presented in the form of countersuggestion The counselor says, "I'm sorry, but your aptitude scores show you won't be able to graduate from college Better not try" This may be the best way to trigger motivation strong enough to carry the young man through the next four years! Other examples "Son, you aren't quite big enough to handle this full-size snow shovel" "The production quota from the front office seems high Perhaps we should ask them to lower it" "This automobile is probably a bit more luxurious than you can afford Better consider the economy line" "Just because all the other professional clubs are building floats for the Winter Carnival parade I don't see why we should" The reader can supply further examples

ADVANTAGES AND LIMITATIONS OF PERSUADING BY INDIRECT SUGGESTION

Using indirect suggestion becomes increasingly attractive as one gains proficiency in persuasion. The prospect of influencing others without obviously dispensing directions and requests is intriguing. As an intrapersonal channel indirect suggestion is sufficiently useful to justify expenditure of much time and effort to master the method. Let us see what particular advantages are associated with indirect suggestion as a means of persuasion.

Favorable Consequences of Indirect Suggestion

When indirect suggestion is used well it is amazingly economical, that is, it says much with few words. When Hubert Humphrey, then a United States Senator, returned in 1959 from a trip to the Soviet Union, Fletcher Knebel wrote in his newspaper column about Humphrey's visit with Khrushchev in Russia. The conference between the United States Senator and the Russian Prime Minister was noteworthy because of its length, something over eight hours. Knebel explained the marathon interview by one simple statement, "Khrushchev made the mistake of asking Humphrey a question." Since his readers were familiar with Humphrey's reputation as a fast and ready talker, this indirect suggestion made a fairly complicated point quickly and memorably.

Indirect suggestion involves the receiver. A "team relationship" is created, for an audience must to some degree interpret the message, and it becomes active in guessing just what the intended meaning might be. In this way the listeners *work with* the persuader to develop his communication. If one quotes Thoreau's statement that "A man is rich in proportion to the number of things he can leave alone," his listeners will become involved speculating about (1) what Thoreau meant, and (2) how what he meant relates to what the source has been saying.

Indirect suggestion can be a means of avoiding responsibility. If one wishes to advance an idea and at the same time avoid being associated with it, he may use indirect suggestion. Since his conclusions are never stated, he can evade libel suits and other unpleasant consequences.

It is possible to avoid responsibility as regards political commentary in a closed society by employing indirect suggestion. The Soviet humor magazine *Krokodil* prints this exchange: "*Question:* When is it right to sit on a porcupine? *Answer:* Only in three cases: when wearing

tin pants, when the porcupine is clean-shaven, and when the Party orders it"

Wherever censorship is a way of life and expression of unpopular ideas is prohibited indirect suggestion flourishes A story widely circulated in the U S S R tells about the occasion when creative writers were assembled in Moscow to receive instructions about incorporating the current party line in their short stories, novels, and plays The writers were slow to grasp just what the Government wanted them to do Finally a respected senior writer took the floor and said that he thought he finally understood "This reminded me," he said, "of what happened many years ago, under the Czars The prince of a remote region had ruled long and well, and when he felt death approaching, he wished to leave for his people his likeness in the form of a photograph So he called in the leading local photographer The picture did not please the prince, who had the photographer beheaded He tried another, and a third, and others, and all were unable to please the prince with their pictures, hence lost their lives Finally the call came to the last remaining photographer who lived in a remote mountain village By then the fate of the photographers summoned by the prince had become common knowledge So the villagers held a going-away party for their friend and mourned his passing But ten days later he returned in good health, his pockets filled with gold

"The villagers were amazed They gathered around him in the square to hear his story The photographer explained, 'It was a routine assignment As you know, our Prince has a hunch back and a squint eye And he loves to hunt So I suggested that he might wish to have a picture taken with his favorite rifle He liked the idea So I had him kneel and take aim, then took his picture He liked it very much'"

Here the writer telling the story paused and added, "This is what our government wants us to do, represent our liabilities as assets"

Whether the incident in Moscow is fact or fable, the effectiveness of this tale in (1) expressing a prohibited point of view, and (2) evading responsibility for its expression cannot be denied

A fourth and final advantage of indirect suggestion is that it contributes to the ethos or prestige of the speaker It impresses! We respect the person who can imply something clearly and cleverly Much of the reputation of famous public speakers rests upon their skill in the use of indirect suggestion

A Major Disadvantage of Indirect Suggestion

Against the four advantages claimed for indirect suggestion we balance only one shortcoming, but it is substantial With indirect sugges-

tion the persuader has increased variability of response With a group of people his goal is usually to achieve a uniform reaction, to have everyone accept the same proposition But because each person words his own conclusion the persuader gets a range of responses Frequently, the differences in interpretation are greater than the persuader believes possible Satire may be taken literally, for example, with the listener firmly of the opinion that the persuader meant the opposite of what he intended To guard against widely erroneous response the persuader may wish to reveal his point late in his presentation He says in effect, "Now we all know what I have been talking about It is thus-and-so" The people who have guessed right are pleased, they feel reinforced Those who are wrong can revise without losing face They can even pretend to themselves that they knew what the speaker was up to all along Making an implied proposition explicit in this way is "hedging" and perhaps a cowardly maneuver, but it insures the persuader against the risk of massive misunderstanding

COMBINING LOGICAL AND NONLOGICAL PERSUASION IN MANAGING CONFLICTING PURPOSES

In discussing methods, advantages, and limitations of logical and nonlogical persuasion we have separated them, for instructional purposes, in unrealistic fashion While one or the other predominates in a given message, both are always present to some degree Theirs is truly a team relationship To make this interaction concrete we will explore a chronic and knotty kind of persuasion problem, winning willing cooperation when genuinely conflicting purposes are represented

Conflicting Purposes as a Problem in Persuasion

Frequently, conflicting purposes go undetected by the persuader If we approach another person in our organization with what seems to us a good idea, we assume automatically that he will give it a fair hearing and, if he likes it, will join in its implementation Often the assumption is false, for the other individual may see things quite differently Usually this difference results from his preference for a quite contradictory turn of events His purposes conflict with ours, and until we understand what his purposes are, we are powerless to proceed *Once identified,* conflicting purposes are often easy to adapt to, or to incorporate

Assuming that the other person wants the same outcome from an

interview that we do is falling into the "pitfall of projection" This can be avoided only by reminding ourselves to consider always the possibility of a conflicting purpose

In teaching a college class in persuasion one of the authors frequently finds himself ignoring an important conflicting purpose Without thinking much about it he assumes that his students share his objectives for the course He wants to teach the students as much about persuasion as he can in the time available, so that they can take this information and put it to work for them, in and outside of school

What this professor forgets is that in every class there are several people who "couldn't care less" about persuasion Their interest is to improve their grade point average Appealing to these individuals in terms of the need for this knowledge and its utility in helping them to succeed socially and professionally is wasted breath But as soon as the teacher recognizes the presence of these students with grade-centered motivation he can quite easily broaden his persuasion to include them He can say, "The three books on your reading list, obtainable on the reserve shelf of the library, are to be read before midquarter These contain valuable theories and other information about persuasion we do not have time to discuss in class, so it is important that you read them carefully and take good notes Besides, if you do not know the contents of these books, you will flunk the midquarter examination" Thus he appeals both to the desire to learn useful information and the conflicting desire to get a high grade However, until he identifies the conflicting purpose he will not be able to use it

DEALING WITH ESTABLISHED, RECOGNIZED CONFLICT

A more fundamental problem is head-on disagreement based upon a conflict of purposes Here the lines have been drawn People who suspected they disagreed now know that is the case Enough definition and comparison have been expressed to permit identification of issues and to establish the convictions that the views represented are incompatible Only capitulation or compromise can resolve the conflict The jurisdictional dispute between the procurement section and Jim Malone's Department of Material Resource Development and Protection in Information Systems illustrates such an established and recognized conflict

Whether or not the persuader represents one of the sides in the dispute, he finds himself playing the role of arbitrator It is essential that he know not only the evidence and reason that support the different views, but also the emotional and prejudicial involvements of the individuals who are interacting And, finally, he must formulate with all pos-

sible care the probable purposes in this situation for each person and attempt to assign a priority ranking to the assumed purposes of each individual

EXAMPLES OF TECHNIQUES FOR REDUCING CONFLICT

To illustrate how logical and nonlogical techniques are interwoven we are including advice derived from many years of experience of first-line managers in a plant with an assembly-line operation Fifteen managers pooled their ideas and classified them in four categories We made no attempt to "refine" their listing in any way We think they communicate much practical wisdom in nonacademic language, clearly and directly

ADVICE FOR PERSUADING WHEN CONFLICTING PURPOSES ARE INVOLVED

I ANALYZING THE OTHER PERSON

Try to know something about the character of the person In case of conflict, be sure you find out *first* why the person or group will not agree

Find the basic objection of the "opposition" by allowing them to talk freely in response to your statements and questions

Always remember a person's particular abilities related to a given task (This includes stature and strength)

Ascertain the "soft spots" that can be used to appeal to a group or individual

Talk the same language

Be sure you understand the other person's point of view Restate his position and ask questions, such as, "Is this what you mean?"

Avoid asking a man to do something he is morally against

II HANDLING YOURSELF

Persist in driving the point

You must have a thorough knowledge of the subject A basic understanding of the problem must be achieved before any persuasion is possible

When trying to persuade a group, use members of the group to help attain your goal

You must remember you do not have all the answers but are looking for some

Remain calm and firm

You must be honest and sincere

When trying to persuade a group, stay in charge of the discussion

Treat all alike

Make sure that you know why there is a conflict—in other words, you must know how and why the other person disagrees

You must understand his side

III USING THE POWERS OF REASONING (CRITICAL THINKING ABILITY)

Give *reasons* why a situation should be handled only one way *Be factual*

The subject to be discussed must be shown to be important to the person or group

Show him or them the advantages
  (a) accept the advantages
  (b) soften the disadvantages

Answer objectionable questions fairly and satisfactorily

Make the points clear so that other persons understand them in the same manner as the one who is doing the persuading

IV USING SUGGESTION (NONLOGICAL APPEALS)

It is imperative that the full attention of the person or group is yours before any attempt at persuasion is made

In a group discussion, try to get the participants to aim at a common goal or objective

Remember the persuasive steps and use them intelligently

A good rule is to praise publicly and criticize privately Never embarrass people in front of their leaders (or associates)

Somehow present the argument or case in such a manner that the other person might believe the idea was wholly or partly his

Gain and maintain attention by appealing to their interests In other words, try to make them *want* to be on your side

Try to get them to agree with you as you go along by using the "yes-response" technique

Reasoned Discourse and Suggestion Are Balanced in a Single Statement

Now that you have read the recommendations of the group of experienced first-line managers, we ask that you rate *each* of the items of advice on the following scale

Percentages of
Relative Predominance of
Reasoned Discourse and Suggestion

0 0	Suggestion	25	50	75	Suggestion	1 0
1 0	Reasoned Discourse	75	50	25	Reasoned Discourse	0 0

The ratings will scatter about the continuum, ranging from one extreme to the other As you tried rating the items of advice you probably felt that you needed to know more about a situation and be acquainted with parties to a dispute before you could locate these with confidence This is to be expected, since you need to know the individuals involved before you can predict what a message will mean to them

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Motive Analysis for the Persuader

CHAPTER 15

Motives may be envisioned as the "engines for persuasion " When a stimulus triggers a motive, energy is released to power a particular response A response can be understood only in terms of the motives that energize it Ultimately, the ability of a persuader to PREDICT RESPONSE of particular people under specified circumstances depends upon his knowledge of differences and similarities in their structures of motivation

Motives Defined and Illustrated

We define motives as *variable sources of energy to pursue selected alternatives* Two key words in this definition need explication "Selected" suggests that a network of motivation *screens* one's input of stimuli, causing a person to respond significantly to only a few of the sights, sounds, smells, etc , presented to his sensing and perceiving mechanisms "Variable" suggests a wide range in *amount* of energy made available when a motive goes in pursuit of an alternative An individual's motivation to "go after" an objective can vary from a barely perceptible impulse to a total effort that surmounts obstacles and endures

Let us look at our own motives to see how this screening and control action takes place All of us are confronted daily with hundreds of opportunities to become interested in things suggested to us, to spend time, energy, and money pursuing these alternatives Yet, at least 95 per cent of the recommendations made to us by advertisers, propagandists, ministers, friends, teachers, and associates are ignored Our motive structure, the network of our habits, interests, needs, desires, and goals, *screens out* the possibilities that are unimportant to us We perceive only the proposals that catch our interest and command our attention The others are suppressed so effectively that many of them are not *consciously* heard or seen

Let us suppose that a recommendation "rings the bell" Perhaps a friend urges us to share with him a season ticket to the concerts of a symphony orchestra One motive aroused is an *interest,* specifically in a certain type of good music If the interest is strong, it may release sufficient energy to impel us to spend a considerable amount of money and rearrange a year's social calendar to permit attending 12 or 15 concerts But if the interest is weak as compared with our devotion to basketball and hockey, available energy may well be insufficient to cause us to follow through on our initial impulse Obviously, something within us tells us what attitude change or action we should implement, and further informs us as to how fast and how far we should go in carrying out an initial impulse This control center we call "motivation"

How Persuasion and Motivation Are Related

The terms "persuasion" and "motivation" are often misused in a way that causes confusion between them Frequently an attempt to persuade is incorrectly referred to as "motivation" A typical misuse is this request "Can you motivate Helen to accept the presidency of the League of Women Voters?" The correct usage would be, "Can you persuade Helen to accept the presidency?" Using the verb "motivate" to designate an attempt to communicate persuasively with Helen suggests that motives can be transferred or reasons important to Helen can be given to her This cannot be done, her motives are already in residence

But yet another confusion results from substituting "motivate" for "persuade" To illustrate Suppose we are consulting with Joe Jackson, director of Sales Training for Y Company After studying communication between his office and the Y Company Abrasive Products Division, we reach a tentative conclusion as to the cause of the difficulty that exists between the two departments We report to Mr Jackson orally "Joe," we announce, "your problem is one of motivation"

Because of the dual meanings of "motivate," Mr Jackson is understandably confused by the term's ambiguity He has no way of knowing whether we are referring to (1) his efforts to influence his salesmen to do the job properly, or (2) to the motives present in the men who make up his sales force Here is a perplexing and readily avoidable breakdown in communication

"Motivation" should be used to refer to the structure of habits, interests, desires, and goals that is part of the personality of an individual Any effort to purposely control his behavior *from the outside* by attaching a recommendation to those motives should be referred to as "persuasion" A simple sentence makes this arbitrary distinction clear and easy to remember Motivation is *in* the person being persuaded

To illustrate the utility of this distinction, let us return to our consultation with Mr Jackson Assume that we all understand and accept this arbitrarily restricted use of "motivate" When we label the problem as "one of motivation," he knows that, in our opinion, the difficulty stems from the values, needs, interests, and goals of the men he has working for him If we had judged the cause to lie in the comunication from Jackson's office to the salesmen, he knows we would have labeled it "persuasion"

The Nature of Motives

We referred to a person's motive structure as a "network of habits, interests, needs, desires, and goals" This includes whatever is of importance to that individual, e g, what he wants out of life, what he covets openly or secretly, as well as what he feels compelled to do, however reluctantly

Perhaps we can come to understand the nature of these abstract-sounding motives by examining two contrasting derivations of a complicated motivation that is found in many adults, the singular obligation to support charitable ventures and contribute time and money to the church

The origin of duty-motives lies in the rewards and punishments that surround one in childhood To different degrees children are praised for socially responsible behavior and scolded for being selfish Little Bernice finds that whenever she plays the role of the responsible person who is concerned with the welfare of others, she gets approval Reciprocally, she discovers that failing to perform in this way causes disapproval and isolation As a result duty-motives and concomitant guilt feelings are firmly established early in her life In contrast, her schoolmate Nell finds

no substantial reward in socially responsible behavior Her family views this behavior as the foolish pursuit of impractical "good intentions " They ridicule any sacrifices she makes for her friends and remind her of the necessity of watching out for "number one " It is not surprising that as Nell grows up she has what appears to others as a crushing insensitivity to all kinds of social obligations

Perhaps as effective as rewards and punishments in fixing behavioral tendencies are the examples set by the family and associates of Nell and Bernice Many of our notions of what constitutes acceptable behavior are acquired by unconscious imitation of our contemporaries, particularly older people and those we admire We replicate the patterns of action and reaction that surround us

The immediate rewards and punishments that headed Nell and Bernice in different directions in their development of duty-motives soon drop out of the picture The direct relation between a decision and a reward or deprivation become less obvious Yet the tendency of Bernice to be overly responsible and of Nell to be very casual about responsibility persists Duty-motive behavior has become habitual in both Bernice feels good when she has helped someone because a well established habit has completed its cycle in an old familiar way Nell fails to perceive opportunities to help others—opportunities that would be imperative to Bernice —because Nell is not in the habit of noticing or pursuing this kind of alternative

Let us return to the specific duty-motive we started with, a felt obligation to support charitable causes and, in particular, to contribute time and money to a church Fortunately for our case study, Nell and Bernice marry church members and, hence, are exposed to persuasion intended to enlist their help in church projects

Nell seems interested when asked to teach a Sunday School class but has no difficulty in calling to mind "good" reasons why she cannot possibly do it As soon as the phone is back in its cradle she forgets the entire episode Bernice responds differently She feels compelled to say "yes" when the minister calls But because her husband works Sunday mornings and her three small children need attention she asks for time to think it over By the time her husband comes home for dinner she has decided that teaching the class is a "must " The husband agrees to pay a high school girl to baby-sit on Sunday mornings Bernice calls the minister and says she will be glad to help

The evolution of contrasting patterns of duty motivation in Bernice and Nell illustrates two fundamental facts about motives They are *dynamic* in that they are continuously changing, and they are habitual in that they operate automatically, without awareness of their owners

Note, too, that the original experiences that started a motive to develop in a given direction remain in the past The adult motive causes consistent behavior in a variety of contexts few of which resemble closely the early conditioning episodes

A person who understands Bernice and Nell will have little difficulty predicting response of either woman to the minister's request To adjust his message to particular receivers and to estimate receptivity or resistance the student of persuasion *must* develop competence in the analysis of human motivation

UNRELIABLE SOURCES OF INFORMATION ABOUT MOTIVES

A short time ago an article syndicated in newspapers around the world presented a new and simple test of motives and abilities The purpose of the test was to identify people who had the motivation to excel in management and engineering as well as the necessary potential The method of the test, the "Leader Gauge," was simple The person being evaluated held his thumbs up beside his ears If ears and thumbs were the same length, then the lucky individual was assumed to possess unusual managerial and engineering potential The author of the test, a Frenchman, claimed what he termed a "success rate in excess of 85 per cent"

We—the present authors—shuddered with apprehension when we read the article All over America, in fact, all over the world, executives confronting the problem of whom to hire or promote would seize upon this resolution of their dilemma We could imagine the confusion of employees confronted suddenly by their bosses and the request "Hold your thumb up by your ear!"

Recently a Minneapolis newspaper reported that a group of 120 lawyers had studied ways of selecting jurors A prominent local judge presented a theory purported to help the lawyer classify personalities and motivations of potential jurors Here the method was to scrutinize body characteristics of size, shape, and posture A skinny, droop-shouldered, lean-faced, thin-legged person was said to be a poor juror for the injured person in a personal injury case, because he lacks a sense of humor and is uncomfortable in the jury box A fairly good candidate is the man with broad shoulders and a booming voice, for he will study every bit of evidence carefully Best for the injured plaintiff is the short fat man who will be jolly, sympathetic, and inclined to be generous An advantage of selecting jurors by body type was claimed to be the "speeding up" of jury selection

Outmoded Notions Persist

The "Leader Gauge" and "jury selection by silhouette" are remnants of our unscientific past. No evidence exists that there is a reliable relationship between personality traits and any aspect of appearance. *No* predominant motivations have been found associated with any physical features. In short, results of research to the present indicate that any system of personality assessment or motive analysis based upon the way a person looks or sounds will supply only misinformation.

Why do these outmoded notions persist? We *want* to believe that we can tell what a person is like when first we meet him. The simple process of assigning discernment to the person with a high brow, sensitivity to the lady with the straight, dainty nose, and will-power to the man with the prominent chin is easy. It enables us to avoid the difficult task of thoughtful personality analysis. Since intuition is almost universally preferred to hard work, we can expect books and articles that advise the reader to "size up" the other person by appearance to be published and purchased for many years to come.

A second unreliable source of information regarding motives we can label "folklore." We are all guided more than we know by generalizations about behavior that are often repeated and believed but have no basis in fact. For example, "A man convinced against his will is of the same opinion still" is yet to be proved. Can you trust a man who does not look you straight in the eye? No experimenter has been able to link shifty-eyedness and lack of integrity.

We have many beliefs about male-female behavioral differences. Consider this explanation of the reason why a woman will never be elected President: "If the female who should aspire to that high office is homely, the men won't vote for her, and if she's good-looking the women won't." Females are credited with being more insightful and less logical than males. Men are braver and more resourceful, women are more resistant to change. None of these notions or others like them have found support in psychological studies.

Some folklore is based on physical attributes, hence it overlaps our first "unreliable source." Red hair indicates a fiery temper, blonde girls are sexier and more scatterbrained than brunettes, and beautiful girls are stupid. Stereotypes contribute much to folklore. Italians are temperamental, Scots are thrifty, Germans are stubborn, French are light-hearted, British are cold and unemotional, and Americans are warm-hearted and friendly. If there were any truth in these and in other premises of folklore—should it be established—any generalization would apply

to the group It would not apply to the behavior of an individual, therefore, the statement would be NORMATIVE

Behavior Is an Unreliable Source

Finally, behavior itself can be an unreliable source of information concerning motives This comes about because a given action may spring from any one of many different underlying motives We see a familiar act and assign it a motive familiar to us, and often we could not be more wrong

One of the difficulties North Americans face in working with South Americans is having to adjust to behavior that involves lack of punctuality and failure to fulfill promises occasionally The North Americans typically conclude that the South Americans are dishonest and unreliable But in the culture of Latin America punctuality is operationally defined in a way that we find difficult to understand The Colombian, for example, may consider himself comfortably on time while his North American host believes him to be inexcusably late The citizen of Bogotá may not come to a meeting he had promised to attend because after thinking it over he found it to be threatening He has lived in times of great insecurity, and his heritage is one fraught with unforseeable peril Understandably, his apprehension in strange situations and among unfamiliar people is greater than ours Many who know Colombians well contend that if you place them in a situation that is free from fear, they honor their commitments as scrupulously as do North Americans

But we do not need to look in remote places to find people assigning false motives to actions What looks like altruism in our neighbor may be selfishness and vice versa The previously discussed "pitfall of projection" operates at full throttle when we impute motives to explain the behavior of other people We say, "If I did what Joe has done, *why* would I do it?" We find our own preferred reason and assign it to Joe, forgetting that *people do things for their reasons, not ours* In short, our own experience is another unreliable source of information about the motives that propel other people

If we identify and understand these and other common sources of misinformation about motives, we have made substantial progress toward increasing our abilities to analyze human motivation

THE INDEX OF FLEXIBILITY

Among your acquaintances are a few persons who enjoy novelty and change A few others can be relied upon to oppose any new idea the

instant it is perceived New ways seem to cause them pain, it is obvious that they are comfortable only with the tried and true Since persuasion is a means of gaining acceptance for change, being able to estimate a person's receptivity to change becomes an important part of analyzing his motives The tendency of an individual to embrace or reject a new proposal can be expressed numerically by assigning him a place on the following scale

How Flexibility Affects Persuasion

Before we discuss techniques of estimating flexibility let us explore the utility of the concept For example, the chairman of the Communication Department of X University approaches the dean of Liberal Arts with a proposal to reorganize his department He knows the dean well, and has found him to be reliably rigid, perhaps rating a score of 10 on our 100-point scale He begins, "Mr Dean, I have a proposal for the Communication Department It will not change our objectives, and the duties of individual staff members will remain the same But with a minor rearranging, I think the overall efficiency of the department can be increased "

The chairman uses language that minimizes change, but nonetheless he expects—and gets—an initial negative response If he had *stressed* the novelty of his proposal, the violence of the rejection might well have canceled out the possibility of "swinging the dean around" to his view by further persuasion

Another persuader, the chairman of the Department of Electrical Engineering, approaches the dean of the Institute of Technology with a similar proposal Now, the dean of I T rates a "ninety-five" on the Index of Flexibility scale He thrives on change and dislikes routine In the Institute the favorite saying about the Dean is that he dislikes doing the same thing the same way—even once! So when the chairman introduces his proposal it is couched in language that contrasts sharply with that directed to the dean of Liberal Arts He begins "Mr Dean, I have a proposal for the Department of Electrical Engineering that will turn the organization upside down! When it is implemented, you won't recognize the place Things are going to be different!" And the dean responds, "Great! Tell me about it "

What a profound difference in initial response exists in the two deans! Only if this is understood can language and manner be adjusted to

heighten the effectiveness of any argument for change directed to either of the two men For one, language and manner must minimize change, for the other, language and manner should maximize it

Resistance or acceptance is momentary Estimating this initial receptivity to change has further implications for the persuader The dean of Liberal Arts, though rigid, has accepted and supported many sweeping changes in his distinguished career And the dean of Technology, although he liked every wild and impractical proposal at first, finally rejected most of them Hence, the initial response tendency predicted by a numerical rating on the scale is a *momentary* resistance or acceptance Normally, judgment takes over, as with the two deans, and the first reaction is often revised

The initial response must be interpreted The persuader who does not understand the momentary nature of the initial reaction may misinterpret it Certainly, the automatic rejection of the Liberal Arts dean should never be taken as his final judgment And if the initial acceptance of the Technology dean was taken as a final decision, by the time the chairman of Electrical Engineering had reached his office, he would find that the dean would have phoned a retraction of his endorsement In dealing with rigid or flexible people, one should *interpret* their first responses and provide ample opportunity for their judgment to take over to produce a stable and durable decision

Assessing the Flexibility Quotient

We come now to the problem of assessing—reliably—the Flexibility Quotient of an individual What clues in his behavior are signs of consistent flexibility or rigidity? Briefly, he will be found to exhibit rigidity in proportion to his addiction to habit

People near the opposite ends of the rigidity-flexibility continuum can be labeled "creatures of habit" and "creatures of novelty" Some of us get much of our psychic satisfaction from routine We like to get up at the same time every morning, have the same breakfast, drive to work by the same route, and begin our workday in a patterned, usual fashion If a street is torn up and we are forced to an alternate route, we are disturbed If the mail is late and instead of reading the mail we must write out reports, we tend to feel very put out indeed We are addicted to habit We defend this way of life by saying that by turning over to habit as much of the daily job as possible we are freeing our conscious mind for more creative endeavors This is a rationalization, but one based upon fairly sound logic

Others of us dislike routine We seek the new experience and find it satisfying We prefer to get up at varied times, to have different breakfast menus, to drive to work by different routes, to have each workday structured to contrast with the one that preceded it We will drive 50 miles to try out a new restaurant We are "creatures of novelty" Considering how important change is in adding interest and excitement to our lives, it is not surprising that we welcome new proposals with open arms

The procedure to be followed in estimating a person's index of flexibility is to study his habits and find out how important they are to him Observe his behavior for a time Regularity, enjoyment of routine, voluntary repetition of scheduled activities, and preference for predictable situations correlate with rigidity Avoidance of routine, highly varied work patterns, general unpredictability, and enjoyment of disruptive incidents identify the person who is flexible

Over several months the behavior of employees in two companies was recorded, and their flexibility scores were checked against their reactions to a proposed change The following list is a good basis for the student's own list of behavior patterns that are valuable for diagnosing rigidity or flexibility in a given individual

HABITS THAT INDICATE FLEXIBILITY OR RIGIDITY

(Validated by selected Ford and Honeywell Managers Items listed received unanimous agreement)

BEHAVIOR ASSOCIATED WITH RECEPTIVITY TO CHANGE

Likes to try new foods

Varies his work pattern each day

Moves immediately to put new ideas to work

Listens attentively to new ideas

Is always ready to take time out for entertainment

Enjoys meeting people

Likes modern style in home furnishings

Accepts changes in procedure and organization eagerly, without complaining

Becomes bored with the status quo

Varies dinner hour from 5 to 8, randomly

Wants to learn about competing ideas
Likes extensive travel during vacations
Has an inquiring attitude

BEHAVIOR ASSOCIATED WITH RESISTANCE TO CHANGE

Does not answer at all when suggestion is made
Rearranges things only after long contemplation
Smokes only one brand of cigarettes
Is sentimental about home, church, family
Arrives at work at exactly the same time each day
Eats roast beef dinner 4 out of 5 days of the week
Smokes cigarettes at certain intervals—one on waking
Buys same make and model of automobile at regular intervals
Is meticulous in care of his physical possessions
Resists suggestion that he modify his wording of a letter
Has same breakfast every day
Refuses to modify work plans even though priorities have changed
Uses the same routine driving to and from work
Vacations are always meticulously planned
Extends precautionary checking procedures to absurd lengths
Rises early—always
Is conservative in dress, in spending, in changing jobs
Will not try new hobbies
Works long, regular hours
Relaxes in the same way, year after year
Purchases clothing that is quiet and conservative
Is stubborn

DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION ON THE FLEXIBILITY SCALE

Apparently there is a normal distribution of people along the index of flexibility continuum Thus most people can be expected to be receptive to change part of the time and resistant to change part of the time Those who fall below 25 or above 75 on the scale are the people whose response becomes predictable They are the ones for whom the stimulus of newness triggers a reaction that has the energy of a full-blown motive

KNOWLEDGE AND THE MODIFICATION OF INITIAL RESPONSE

As a final comment on applying the index of flexibility we will stress its momentary nature and the frequency with which judgment takes over to modify the first response The more knowledgeable a person is about a proposal, the more likely he is to review his first reaction critically If the individual lacks knowledge in the area of a new idea, he will probably not modify his first response Thus rigidity or flexibility tendencies will be influenced proportionately to the amount of knowledge the receiver possesses We can painlessly make snap judgments of remote people and unfamiliar incidents, but as we learn more about any problem clear-cut decisions become more difficult Since the initial rejection or acceptance impulse is, after all, a snap judgment, it can be expected to persist unchallenged only when its owner lacks knowledge and understanding

THE LADDER OF DEFICIT MOTIVES

A substantial contribution to the theory of human motivation is the *sequential* arrangement of basic needs These are sequential in that some needs take priority over others, and are more "basic" in that these must be satisfied first Only when the lower, more fundamental, needs are met reasonably well can higher level needs emerge

Arranging these motives as rungs in a ladder suggests that activation of each level depends upon the gratification of needs below

Most elementary among the causes of striving behavior are physiological needs primarily, food, air, and protection from physical harm,

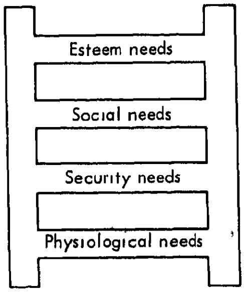

Figure 11 Ladder of Deficit Motives

and secondarily, the relief of tensions that have a clear and direct physical causation, e.g., the need for sleep, for activity, and for sexual experience. When a person is severely deprived of satisfaction of one or more of his physiological needs, all other needs become insignificant. For example, until a supply of food he considers adequate is obtained, the hungry individual behaves as though he lacked security, social approval, or esteem needs. Moreover, his deprivation colors his thinking. He contemplates the future only in terms of food.

But when there is ample food and other physiological needs are met, what happens? He begins to be concerned about security until he is no longer insecure. Subsequently, he tends to become preoccupied with his needs for social approval. When he has sufficient favorable attention he then becomes centrally concerned with his "image," the satisfaction of his esteem needs.

Explanation of the Four Deficit Motives

The names of the levels in the ladder suggest quite accurately the nature of the motives they represent. *Security needs,* sometimes called safety needs, refer to our strong desire for a predictable, organized environment in which we and our families and friends can look into the future without fear of disruptive change. Any circumstance that makes the future uncertain increases the pressure of security needs. *Social needs* become important when physiological and security matters are well in hand. Then the needs to "belong" with other people and to give and receive affection become critical. *Esteem needs* are two-fold: the need for self-esteem and the parallel desire for the high regard of others. Esteem needs will be strong only when a person has succeeded in meeting physiological, security, and social needs.

Why are these needs sequential? An implied key proposition that helps to clarify the sequential order of basic needs is this: *Satisfied needs do not motivate behavior.* This explains why in a given person at a particular time one of these four motives tends to be dominant, whereas those above and below it have little influence.

Why are these needs "deficit"? Why do we refer to our diagram as a "deficit" ladder? Two related concepts, *deficit motivation* and *gratification health,* will make this clear.

Motives in the ladder are universals. Their satisfaction is prerequisite to the functioning of a healthy personality. In any stable society these basic requirements are readily met. Consequently, a mature and well-adjusted individual will have few concerns caused by motives in the

ladder. But a personality in conflict often becomes preoccupied with one need. Perhaps esteem, perhaps social, possibly security, even physiological needs may come to be of central importance to such a person. For example, adverse circumstances, such as the unexpected loss of a job, may cause a man to "bounce back down the ladder" to the level of *security* which then—temporarily—becomes dominant. An urge from any of the ladder motives is *deficit motivation,* deficit in the sense that the subject has fallen behind and is trying to catch up. If he were well-adjusted, none of these needs would be of significant concern to him.

Gratification health views these same phenomena from a positive perspective. If a person succeeds in meeting his four deficit needs, then he is free of them and available for other interests.

Any hypothesis suggesting that a strong, well-adjusted, and resilient personality rests on a foundation of need-gratification is bound to conflict to some degree with the remnants of the Puritan ethic in American culture. We value "doing without," self-deprivation, denying ourselves the "good things" in life. The present writers assign all beliefs that need-frustration is good for the personality to the impressive accumulation of mankind's tragic mistakes. We contend that a person who has experienced a *minimum* of deprivation is better able to withstand severe deprivation than is another who has been regularly deprived.

To summarize, all men are motivated by the needs in the deficit ladder. There is a normal progression from the bottom to the top, with the ultimate movement out of the ladder to other dominant motivations. The well-adjusted adult has deficit motivations of substantial strength only in times of emergency. Then he soon progresses up the ladder again and "over the top."

Implications for Managers

Energy expended in satisfying deficit needs lowers productivity. It is desirable for a person to move up the steps of the ladder as rapidly as possible. But this evolution is aided or handicapped by environment. There are direct and practical implications for supervisors and managers.

It is possible to plan a business enterprise so that satisfaction of security, social approval, and esteem needs will be easy—or difficult. We can help our people meet security needs by keeping them informed of what is going on and what is coming in the future. We can make it easy for them to make friends and get to know their associates on and off the job by physical arrangements, regulations and recreation programs, thus satisfying requirements for social approval. Esteem needs can be met in part by building into our organization a system that recognizes and pub-

licizes achievement Or, we can disregard these opportunities with the result that our employees waste their energy worrying about their lack of security, about insufficient human interaction, and about deficiencies in prestige The manager will be wise to remember that an employee divides his energy between worry over his selfish concerns and productive job-directed effort Increasing one diminishes the other, and vice versa

EMOTIONAL TENSION MOTIVES

Earlier, we distinguished emotion from motive Now we must combine the two, for we are approaching a category of motivation that has its origin in the emotional condition The three emotional tension motives mastery, social approval, and conformity spring from the primary emotions of rage, love, and fear We will sketch in the theory of their development and consider in particular the problem caused when *one* of these motives becomes dominant

Derivation of Emotional Tension Motives

Mastery motives appear as urges to excel, to succeed, to overcome obstructions, to compete, in general, to conquer situations in the face of difficulty We can trace the development of these motives from *rage* behavior by showing that while rage initially comes only from physical restraint, soon verbal and other symbolic restrictions restrain us mentally, with the same effect The child's tantrum behavior is modified, too, with blind struggling responses evolving to a cunning thwarting of the people who impose restrictions Eventually, many techniques for overcoming obstructions develop A good example would be the scholar who works for years to overcome an obstruction to his understanding of a problem, propelled by a "remote" form of rage behavior that has been elaborated into a complex mastery motivation

Social approval motives seek favorable reactions of others, reach for attention, cause us to seek company when we are alone, help us conform to the customs and standards of our culture, and develop an appetite for sympathy These have their roots in a basic *love* emotion Examples of such behavior in the infant are movements to perpetuate stroking and cuddling Later, the child responds to the presence of the person who gives him love Still later, this response may occur when members of the family are together The many satisfactions we find in group activities emerge from an elaboration of these "love stimulus" encounters Here is

the fountainhead of our powerful and universal needs for socialization

A desire for social approval is not a weak or passive motivation at any level of maturation The baby reacts vigorously and persistently when fondling is terminated Children pester adults to the point of explosion in their quest for favorable attention Adults do not wait for social stimulation to come to them, they seek it aggressively Like mastery, the social approval-emotional tension motive releases an abundance of sharply focused energy

An excess of basic *fear* emotion contributes to the prominence of the third emotional tension motive in a personality conformity Fear of punishment leads to patterns of withdrawal and avoidance that are essentially efforts to avoid pain Punishment overstimulates the child The experience becomes more memorable when punishment is accompanied by strong disapproval, for this associates punishment with blame Repeated punishing episodes produce an irrational fear of criticism and the tendency to inhibit any unconventional acts that we call "social conformity"

Strong conformity motivation makes a person chronically apprehensive In his childhood, fear was rewarding in that he avoided breaking taboos and resultant punishment by being continuously afraid As an adult, he is still "running scared," seeking security by not permitting himself to stand out as "different" from the group in any way He tends to "go to pieces" when he confronts unpredictabilities and insecurities that other individuals would consider routine

How One Emotional Tension Motive May Become Dominant

Obviously all of us are motivated by mastery, social approval, and conformity tendencies If we take the time and make an effort, we can recall experiences in our childhood that laid the foundation for each We can trace all three emotional tension motives through their incorporation into our personality in the form of reaction tendencies that are infinitely more complex than the behavior patterns that characterized them in childhood

Most of our associated emotional *tensions* have fallen by the wayside Habits of mastery, social approval, and conformity loom large in our lives, but the emotional conditions of rage, love, and fear are *felt* only when habitual reactions are inadequate to the needs we must meet An emotional tension motive in an adult is a habit, and it produces actual emotion only when there is frustration of the motive

We contend that no single emotional tension motive should far outperform the other two At times the well-adjusted person should seek

social approval, sometimes he should enjoy challenge and breaking restrictions, and occasionally he should conform out of fear for the consequences. But some individuals find that one of the three motives has become persistent and has achieved a larger-than-usual importance. Let us look at three hypothetical cases to see how this could come about. Then we will look at the consequences.

DERIVATION OF CONFORMITY DOMINATED MOTIVATION

Suppose that Peter was born into a home that was predominantly authoritarian. His father set the standards for behavior, with inflexible rules that could be violated only under the pain of severe punishment. The little boy soon learned the advantage of being afraid. Because fear was rewarding in that it kept him from being punished, he matured into a more-than-usually apprehensive person. Because punishing experiences were the outstanding ones in his childhood, he will probably find that conformity motivation seems highly important to him. It will frequently dictate his choice among available alternatives.

DERIVATION OF SOCIAL APPROVAL DOMINATED MOTIVATION

Perhaps Joe spent his childhood in an environment that provided him with all physical necessities but denied him the warmth of love and affection. Divorce caused him to be reared by substitute parents who were not interested in Joe beyond the fulfillment of their obligation to keep him fed and clothed. Initially, his rare moments of experiencing physical affection and, later, the painfully few instances when others showed that they liked and appreciated him aroused love emotion but also guaranteed that his need to be loved would be frustrated most of the time.

While fear and rage are abient impulses in that they strive to terminate an unpleasant condition, the love emotion is *adient*. Love attempts to perpetuate a pleasant circumstance and requires a responding human being who cooperates in prolonging the pleasant sensation. Hence in the case of love, overstimulation is deprivation. When normal outlets for love impulses are denied, need for them is intensified. Getting affection then tends to become more important than anything else. In Joe, it becomes his highest value. As an adult, getting social approval is the most important motivation in Joe's life, because it is most rewarding to him.

DERIVATION OF MASTERY DOMINATED MOTIVATION

Little Bobby's parents supplied rules of conduct but lacked the determination to enforce them. The first time Bobby *really* wanted some-

thing and his parents said "No," he threw a tantrum, screaming and banging his head on the floor Their response was, "Well, if you want it that badly, you can have it " Bobby learned a great lesson When you do not like restrictions, break them with rage behavior Because he could thus control his parents in crisis situations, mastery behavior became more rewarding to him than any other He grew up addicted to challenge and competition, adult exercises in breaking restrictions By comparison, other motives seemed unimportant and unattractive

How a Dominant Emotional Tension Motive Modifies Behavior

The hypothetical cases of Bobby, Joe, and Peter suggest ways in which one of the three emotional motives become dominant Relatively few people, perhaps 10 or 15 per cent, have a dominance of one of these motives that could properly be termed "excessive " Their "life style" is, to a significant degree, a product of their drive to master, to gain social approval, or to conform

An excessive emotional tension motive dominance is best viewed as a "deficit" need A "dominated" personality cannot be free to direct his energies to projects outside himself unless his unusual demands for challenges, or positive recognition, or security are met Similarly, any frustration precipitates *emotional* behavior characteristic of the dominant motive To illustrate

Suppose that Bobby, Peter, and Joe each confront the same crisis, the sudden, unexpected loss of his job Joe's dominant need for social approval dictates his first reaction "People didn't think well of me!" He would seek out his associates, who would explain that Joe had been highly thought of and that he had lost his position only because the plant has been reorganized Then Joe would talk to his former boss, who would praise him and explain that he was an excellent, productive employee and that the plant was unfortunate in losing him through reorganization Joe would feel better and set about finding another position

Peter—conformity dominated—would be terror-struck by the unanticipated insecurity His normal fearful state would be intolerably aggravated by his uncertain future Typically, he would take any job—even one beneath his training and experience—to terminate his panic

In contrast, Bobby would *enjoy* being suddenly deprived of his means of livelihood His rage reaction would be "Those SOB's! I'll show 'em!" And he would proceed to get a job better than the one he had lost

We reiterate that relatively few people are dominated by one emotional tension motive to the extent illustrated by our hypothetical examples However, a strong dominance of this sort so profoundly affects

one's life-style that understanding it becomes of considerable importance The concept of "balanced" emotional tension motives is helpful in predicting behavior, but the theory of "imbalance" is of greater utility in explaining behavior that, at first glance, seems to be irrational And 10 to 15 per cent of our associates is a significant number, especially when they are all problem cases

Let us review the acquisition of emotional tension motives by arranging the relevant factors in Figure 12

Kind of Overstimulation	Nature of Response	Associated Emotional Condition	Resulting Motivation
Restraint	Avoidant	Rage	Mastery
Punishment	Avoidant	Fear	Conformity
Denial of affection	Aidant	Love	Social approval

Figure 12 Emotional Tension Motives

Finally, why do dominant emotional tension motives not extinguish themselves following repeated satisfactions? Two key terms suggest a possible answer "overstimulation" and "substitute satisfaction" Emotional tensions from overstimulation are present when this behavior is learned, and patterns acquired while under emotional stress tend to persist The dominant motive tends to be a substitute satisfaction because, rather than looking for a variety of rewards, an emotional tension dominated person tries to structure each situation so it will yield what he has come to "need" most, security, mastery, or approval This substitute for a more direct satisfaction can never be completely adequate Hence, techniques of substituting the dominant motive for others cannot be perfected, and the dominant motive persists

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A Dynamic Psychology of Motivation

CHAPTER 16

Thus far, our discussion of motives has been limited in several ways Although we have examined the differences between emotions and motives and discussed their interaction, we have not explored the extent to which a person's motives may change, or the influences that could bring about a modification of his motives Any identity of habits and motives has not yet been examined, although we have implied that they are closely related and that their relationship is important

The motives we have talked about to this point are basic in the sense that they are *universal needs,* common to all human beings in varying degrees at different times These were *deficit* motives, i e, a normally balanced personality requires that these needs be met most of the time Whenever one of the deficit motives is vigorously active in the adult, something is wrong When none is demanding energy of its owner, a stable, potentially productive state exists that we call "gratification health"

The present chapter will attempt to complete our survey of motivations and their contributions to the personalities of people We will conclude with a system for motive analysis that will help our readers to more systematically—and accurately—classify the motives of those with

whom they communicate and, as a result, will increase their ability to predict the responses to particular messages

MOTIVE STRUCTURE AND THE SELF

Our discussion of the ways a person moves up and down the ladder of deficit motivation illustrates a main point in understanding motives *A person's motive structure undergoes continuous, though gradual, change* Our habits, interest, goals, and desires evolve with changing circumstances and advancing years We *normally* are in the process of becoming more or less secure, more or less concerned about our interaction with other people, more or less preoccupied with our self-image and the opinions of us held by our associates

The successful person moving up the ladder does not lose his physiological imperatives or his need for favorable recognition Rather, he turns over to *habit* the job of keeping these requirements met He learns to routinely satisfy his deficit needs, consequently, he is able to treat them as minor rather than major objectives in his life The most obvious example is the hunger motivation that is part of that basic deficit requirement, our physiological needs Early in life we learn to use routine, regular intake of food to reduce our hunger drive Now we seldom if ever get hungry We eat three or more times a day from habit No longer is the procurement of food a challenging or even interesting activity in our lives Our habitual eating patterns free us from concern with problems of subsistence and permit us to devote our mental and physical energy to more challenging pursuits

In this manner most motives become habits We perfect our techniques of meeting a need to a point at which further improvement seems unimportant When we can relax with our methods of coping with our security, social approval, and esteem requirements we reach the top of the ladder, leaving an automated trail of behavior patterns behind The computer programs we call habits work for us with little conscious direction, eliminating deficit motivations from our high priority list of challenging problems

Emotional tension motives become habits in similar fashion Well-rehearsed behavior appears to be genuine mastery, conformity, or social approval reaction but is actually a facsimile of the real thing, for the associated emotional condition is no longer present Only when the habitual emotional tension pattern is frustrated does basic fear, rage, or love

emotion develop. Genuine emotion is normally an unusual event in our week-to-week humdrum existence.

We have sketched the portrait of the well-adjusted adult as a neatly cataloged repertoire of habit reactions, a bundle of learned behaviors ranging from the simple to the exceedingly complex. These are triggered by familiar stimuli. These learned responses satisfy the great majority of on and off the job requirements with minimum expenditure of energy and maximum conservation of critical thinking resources for more demanding and creative endeavors. But, in all of us, some motives never evolve into habits. Why should this be true, and what are the kinds of motives that tend to persist?

Motives Which Endure

One trait of personality that frequently persists as *motive* is the pathological deficit need. From causes in heredity and environment—we cannot as yet assess their relative influence—a person may find that he has much more difficulty than does the average person in satisfying a particular deficit motivation. For example, a job that provides abundant security to 99 of 100 people may seem very shaky and unpredictable indeed to the hundredth employee. Or, an individual may seem to others to be surrounded by friends, yet he may suffer because he feels his social relationships are quite inadequate. Perhaps the deficit motive that most frequently gets out of kilter in our culture is esteem. A substantial flow of recognition may nevertheless leave the esteem-hungry person feeling unrecognized and unfairly treated. Insatiable deficit motivations are pathological because their threshold of satisfaction is so high as to be practically unattainable. The person with one of these motivational quirks tends to "bog down" on the corresponding level of the deficit ladder and find resumption of upward progress difficult or impossible. The motive assumes exaggerated importance and absorbs excessive amounts of its owner's time and energy.

Should the reader decide that he is more preoccupied with one of the deficit needs than are his associates, we will mention that a simple self-therapy often produces good results. The aim of the game here is *insight*. The owner of a suspected pathological deficit motive can systematically collect evidence that his threshold of satisfaction for a need is or is not different from that of others in his group. Should he find that his requirements are significantly greater, he can recognize and confront the difference. Conscious readjustment of a threshold of satisfaction is possible if consistent efforts are made over a period of time.

Another kind of motive that often remains central to a personality rather than being relegated to habit is the excessive or dominant emotional tension motive. When mastery, social approval, or conformity assumes high status in a person's scale of values, many other deserving issues are pushed aside. Here also the threshold of satisfaction is artificially high. Because satisfaction of the emotional tension motive does not often occur, frustration produces an emotional condition, which in turn further elevates the threshold of satisfaction. In this manner, the expenditure of unreasonable amounts of energy to satiate the insatiable becomes a chronic condition.

The third category of motive that is usually not reduced to habit contrasts with deficit motivation in that it is other-than-self centered. Where deficit motivation is egocentric and aimed at shoring up the psyche, the other-than-self centered motive bypasses the ego and treats the self as a means of accomplishing something outside the self. Interest in a process for its own sake releases our energy. Examples are challenging hobbies, such as study of history, art, or classical music, or tennis, golf, or hunting. Research interests exploring or discovering the unknown frequently take on motive strength. Task-centered motivations in which a person discovers that improving an operation or helping employees develop toward their potential has become important to him are often other-than-self centered.

Needless to say, that which appears to be other-than-self centered is often self-centered. We head the P.T.A., act as den mother for brownie, or cub scouts, collect for the Community Chest, and teach Sunday School for either self or other-than-self centered motives. If we are involved in the activity because it will do something for *us,* then it is self-centered. Only if we find ourselves driven mainly by a desire to make something a success for its own sake can we know that our motive is other-than-self centered.

Any problem or process outside ourselves that claims our interest at a high level without a selfish benefit is sufficiently challenging and changing that managing it can never be relegated to habit. Later in this chapter we will explore the nature of other-than-self centered motivation. We will see why it looms large in the psychological makeup of intelligent adults.

The above motives that never become habits share one important characteristic, *they are incapable of completion.* Pathological deficit motives and excessive emotional tension motives have unattainable high thresholds of satisfaction. The other-than-self centered motive intrigues us because the problem at its focus demands our best effort, which is never quite enough. Our enduring motives keep us scrambling in healthy or

unhealthy endeavors throughout our lives, preventing to some degree our conversion into mechanical monsters living by habit alone

Habits in Motivation

Now that we have discussed what prevents motives from turning into habits, we will reverse the coin and see what may cause a motive to become habitual

At one time in a child's life the desire to walk is a dominant motivation Perfecting the process claims his attention and uses much of his output of energy As he becomes competent in locomotion in an upright position he loses interest When he achieves performance skills that meet his needs he stops thinking about walking per se and from that point on habits take over

Later, driving an automobile may take on strength as a motive As he did when he learned to walk, a person loses interest in improving his abilities to manipulate a car, often soon after passing his driving examination, and from that point on habit patterns meet his needs of transportation over great distances the way his habitual walking skills satisfy his requirements for completing shorter trips

What is true of mechanical coordinations like walking and driving an automobile is also characteristic of learned behaviors involving relatively greater amounts of thinking The apprentice in a shop not only acquires skills of his trade but standards of performance as well Both become habitual A student learns not only to study in certain ways, but he will become accustomed to a specific level of scholarly achievement He forms predominantly mental habits such as suspending judgment, or the opposite, jumping to conclusions The person who regularly delays decision until he has inspected some evidence probably was at one time strongly motivated in the direction of better decision making When suspending judgment was found to be an effective technique it was used repeatedly and became a habit

Habits seem almost unlimited in their possible complexity Notetaking in high school and college offers at first a challenging motivation With practice the process becomes increasingly automatic By the time a student is a junior or senior in college he sits in a lecture hall, daydreaming passively, until the professor's voice changes in a way that signals "the following material may appear in the next examination" Our student picks up his pencil and using the note-taking shorthand habits he has developed records the essential content of the next few sentences compactly in his notebook When the professor's voice resumes its normal

monotone he drops his pencil and returns to his daydream Truly, there may be merit in the old saw, "The lecture system of instruction makes it possible for the information in the instructor's notebook to get into the student's notebook without going through the mind of either "

The tendency of habits, once started, to complete themselves, results in their releasing energy that completes the habit pattern Hence, habits may be said to have "motive-strength," and to behave like motives We know them to be an important part of the motive structure of an individual personality

Central and Peripheral Habits

Our criterion for classifying the habits of a person as "central" or "peripheral" is the extent to which he relies upon them in the daily routines of living Habits that matter in the sense that they are important to success or failure in significant events are central Habits that make little difference to their owner or those around him are peripheral There is some logic to the belief that a person attempting self-improvement should identify his central habits and decide whether or not he will attempt to modify them and, if so, how he will set about it

Certain habits tend to be central in organizational living Habits related to standards of workmanship and achievement are important, since being predictably slipshod or meticulous usually influences productivity and efficiency The tendency to suspend judgment seems to be related to a preference for routine (as we noted in our discussions of Index of Flexibility in Chapter 15) and the habit of uncritically accepting new ideas seems associated with dislike of routine These clusters of habits are central to the roles we play in most group efforts Habits of punctuality, reliability, thoroughness, and even the habit of working hard have sufficient interaction with the objectives of organizations to be considered predominantly central Although the habit of saying what you think has some penalties, many organizations reward it and make it central However, at certain times and places the habit of keeping one's mouth shut may be more rewarding, hence it becomes central

Peripheral habits are just as firmly fixed as are central habits, the difference is that they are of little consequence The idiosyncrasies that we try to tolerate in one another are built of peripheral habits How we walk, talk, move, and gesticulate are elementary habit patterns Unless we deviate far from the norm of our group, our peculiarities in these activities neither contribute to nor detract from our social and vocational effectiveness However, a severe stutter or an uncontrollable facial tic

may interfere with our communication to the extent that it becomes central and requires modification

Associated with every job or hobby is a wealth of motor skills, originally motives, that become peripheral habits Operating a lathe, typing, or taking shorthand, serving a tennis ball, swinging a golf club, timing an automobile engine, operating a video-tape recorder, all include hundreds of perfected nerve-muscle coordinations In the aggregate these skills are important to the process to which they contribute, but individually we consider them to be peripheral habits that form a frame of reference in which crucial events occur

ROLE PLAYING AS A PERIPHERAL HABIT

An interesting outlet for our peripheral habits is *casual role playing* Drawing upon the range of vocal and physical behaviors we have practiced at one time or another, we simulate mastery, conformity, or other integrations of behavior We often do this "for kicks" At a dull party we may take center stage by assuming the role of a "social-approval dominated" individual When we "play the devil's advocate" to stimulate a discussion we simulate mastery behavior This behavior pattern has some utility in addition to the fun it provides A more solemn instance is acting out a humble, fear-dominated, submissive, conformity-motivated character when you are arrested for speeding with no convenient alibi

Casual role playing often misleads an observer who tends to interpret unusual and incidental behavior as significant and central Human beings are experimentally inclined, even playful We should expect them to exhibit atypical, bizarre behaviors in circumstances that permit these without penalty Persons far from home, e g , overseas, often indulge in apparently uninhibited actions that seem, for them, quite "out of character" This suggests that the amount of casual role playing done by someone may be inversely proportional to the likelihood that he will be watched and that his behavior will be reported to those he knows best

USING HABITS IN PERSUASION

How are habits used to persuade? For one thing, they enable us to predict response better than we could without knowledge of the persuadee's habitual behavior When our proposal is in harmony with a system of central habits, when, for example, it promises to routinize a presently chaotic procedure and make possible better workmanship, the person whose habit structure includes regularity and preference for precision can be expected to respond more favorably than one who habitually needs uncertainty and is indifferent to uniform quality in his performance

Peripheral habits are also useful The requirements placed upon the person whom you wish to persuade by your proposal should be consistent with his personal idiosyncrasies and his motor skills, for example, the slow-spoken wallflower will resist change that stretches the stereotype of his speech personality to the point that an assigned new role is uncomfortable People who do a lot of casual role playing and enjoy it will tend to accept a recommendation that provides them opportunity to play a variety of roles in its implementation

The able persuader triggers specific habits in his receivers These habits tend to complete their cycles and, in so doing, contribute energy that moves those who receive the message toward acceptance of the persuader's recommendation

OTHER-THAN-SELF CENTERED MOTIVATION

By "self-centered" we mean "turned inward" Here the focus of interest and the major goal of expenditure of energy are enhancement of the ego "Other than-self centered" motivation subordinates the self (personal considerations) to the external process or person that claims our attention The distinction can be stated in a paraphrase of the late President Kennedy "If you are interested in what the project can do for you, your motivation is self-centered If you are interested in what you can do for the project, you are experiencing other-than-self motivation"

The Effects of Other-Than-Self Centered Motivation

In his book *Man's Search for Meaning* Viktor Frankl tells how he attempted to discover what kept certain inmates of concentration camps alive while most around them died In each case he found a burning motive outside the self One had a book to write, another an experiment to complete, a third had children he had never seen, so he refused to die until he had seen them These men had forward-looking purpose in their lives, a condition that seemed to sustain them and release reserves of energy

All of us have known men who "lose" themselves in their work The writers recall a colleague in medical education who obtained the first electron microscope in his locality He became obsessed with a desire to see more of the human cell than had been seen before Considerations of self were put aside He forgot to eat, slept irregularly, neglected obligations to the point that he was in danger of losing his job and his wife Fortunately, he won his battle with the new device before he was fired or

divorced He contributed significantly to the art of using the electron microscope in medical research and gradually re-established a more practical balance among his motivations

Engineers doing research for the exploration of space frequently become involved in their task in an other-than-self centered fashion The problems of miniaturizing circuits, perfecting guidance and control systems, or achieving a "soft" landing on the moon often become dominant preoccupations The reward to the participating engineer is the thrill of improving the process rather than getting a salary increase, if his is other-than-self centered motivation

Teachers and managers become involved in the achievements of their students and employees One sales manager came out of retirement because of the satisfaction he felt in helping younger men advance He had unusual ability to discover potential in men who worked for him and to encourage its development Although he received no material return from the success of the men he assisted, the need to help them was his central motivation and its achievement his highest reward

Perhaps the most common other-than-self centered motivation is this interest in other people and their accomplishments Family living develops this in abundance When father discovers that his son's athletic career has become important to him, or mother finds that she gets great satisfaction from her daughter's development as a musician, or grandfather takes pride in the precocious antics of his grandchildren, other-than-self centered motivation is taking effect

From his own experiences and those of acquaintances the reader can add many instances of motivation analogous to the above example The prevalence and importance of motives in the other-than-self centered category cannot be denied It is unfortunate that so little has been written about them, only recently have they received serious study It is interesting to note that most theories minimize their role in determining human behavior

Reasons for Prevalent Disregard of Other-Than-Self Centered Motivation

One reason why other-than-self centered motives have not claimed our attention is that talking about them is usually considered inappropriate in our culture It is fashionable to gripe about company policy and administrative details, such as coffee breaks and fringe benefits Salary, recognition or, more usually, lack of it, and advancement are topics that are discussed freely But these all represent self-centered motivations Verbalizing about the great satisfaction you get from your work would

make you very self-conscious indeed! Although many substantial studies show "achievement" to be the greatest single satisfier in many vocations, it will go unmentioned by those who value it most Admitting to others that getting a problem solved on the job was a great source of pleasure to you seems pretentious and egotistical Consequently, we conceal our other than-self centered motivations from others and even from ourselves

Another reason we do not think in terms of other-than-self centered motivations is the unspoken but nearly universal assumption that this kind of behavior is rare and possessed only by a few superior human beings This fallacy pictures man as selfish, supremely self-centered Being able to think in terms of concerns outside the self must then be a godly attribute, rather than a human quality Hence, only a few of us can be expected to attain such noble detachment The discovery that other-than-self centered motives are a part of everyone's motive structure and that much if not most of a mature and well-adjusted person's behavior is influenced by these motives is relatively new and quite revolutionary Belief in the essentially corrupt nature of man has been an obstacle to the recognition of widespread other-than-self centered motivation

A third highly influential reason why other-than-self centered motives have not claimed our attention is our failure to grasp their nature Other-than-self centered motivation has been confused with *altruism* Anything not self-centered is altruistic, according to the polar thinking of many people It is most important to understand that other-than-self centered behavior has *no* "do-gooder" implication What makes it other-than-self centered is that one's interest is focused upon a process, outside the self The outside preoccupation can be wholesome, unwholesome, or morally neutral for both the owner of the motive and others involved The safecracker may be highly motivated in his quest for the best way to blow a safe, the purveyor of illegal drugs may be profoundly involved in perfecting the means of importing heroin and getting it to his high school student customers, the drug addict may become so absorbed in studying the effects of LSD and other drugs on his nervous system that he destroys himself To place other-than-self centered motives in a realistic frame of reference, we must remove from the concept any and all moral connotation

Although we can cite many examples of other-than-self centered motivation that are not altruistic or even moral, we contend that a majority of behavior patterns resulting from this motivation are good not only for their owners but for society They tend to be more whole some and praiseworthy than not, for the very good reason that interest in an external process involves other people in a disinterested relationship Warping the world to fit our selfish needs is not necessary So we operate with increased rationality toward goals shared with others, an

activity that tends to increase the social worth and ethical quality of those goals

WHAT OTHER-THAN-SELF CENTERED MOTIVES CONTRIBUTE TO YOUR PERSONALITY

What you are interested in *outside* yourself makes your individuality, your distinctive personality Deficit motives and associated habits are universals, found in much the same form in all people Since we all confront the problem of coping with these common needs, they cannot be expected to set us apart one from the other Our uniqueness—if any—results from becoming involved in projects and people in other than deficit-directed activities

The renowned psychologist Gordon W Allport, in his book *Pattern and Growth in Personality*, strongly emphasizes "propriate" motivations "Propriate" is his term for other-than-self centered In Allport's words, motives in this category tend to become "warm and important" to their owner Propriate interests form a part of the personality that we regard as "peculiarly ours" Furthermore, he suggests that this sector of human personality be termed the "proprium"

The unabridged dictionary supplies definitions of "proprium" that shed light on what other-than self centered motives contribute to our "life-style," or personality From its Latin origin come two meanings "a possession, a characteristic" From later use of the term in logic we find "a property or attribute which belongs to every member of a species but is not contained in its definition or essence" Finally, from the early eighteenth-century writings of philosopher-scientist Swedenborg comes this meaning "selfhood, the principle of individuation in personality" The latter specialized usage undoubtedly led to Allport's choice of the term "proprium" to designate a central element in his theories of personality Allport's adjectives "warm and important" further suggest that propriate interests contribute something of distinction to the human personality While in this context "warm and important" are connotative to the point of having negligible denotation, these words communicate vividly an understanding of the way a person relates to his other than-self motives

The theory that the sum total of things you are interested in *outside* yourself makes you a distinctive individual is an exciting concept *You* choose these outlets while your deficit needs, in a sense, choose you Will and intelligence are significant factors in propriate motivation Anyone who wishes to do so can develop new other-than-self centered inter-

ests At first he will probably have to force himself to work at the process or project, but as he trains himself in activities associated with it and learns more about it, the chances are that his interest will become self-sustaining Also, circumstances that are at first punishing sometimes become rewarding and lead to absorbing other-than-self centered preoccupations An example could be the woman required to watch over a mother with a broken hip for several hours a day who subsequently becomes preoccupied with projects to care for our rapidly increasing population of oldsters

Other-than-self centered motives represent a wide-open frontier for self-improvement We can plan a developing personality and become to a large degree the person we would like to be What we create in new external interests tends to become vital to us By concentrating our attention outside ourselves inner conflicts are minimized These propriate motives contribute much to our achievements and satisfactions As other-than-self centered motives claim an increasing share of our attention and energy we are *growing,* increasingly utilizing our potentials If self-centered motives become more important to us, we are moving in an opposite direction, toward inhibition and lessened productivity Many elements that determine which way we go are discretionary By making an effort we can extend our other-than-self centered interests and increasingly guide our lives in a growth direction Rewards are substantial We accomplish more and become more interesting people to know

A SYSTEM OF MOTIVE ANALYSIS

We will now arrange all of the motives and habits we have discussed in a model which, because of its shape, we will label "The Oval of Human Motivation" It diagrams relationships among the motivational aspects of personality, in a *closed system* Thus each motive or habit has a spatial association with every other habit or motive The visual representation serves as a memory system When you attempt to classify a motive in yourself or in another person, and the first guess proves to be wrong, related motives that are other likely possibilities spring to mind from visual recall of the complete diagram

Motivations in the bottom half of the oval are predominantly self-centered, and those in the upper portion are other-than-self centered The shaded band separating these contrasting kinds of interests suggests that some motives have elements of both other-than-self and self-centeredness within them Hence, we should not expect to classify *all* motives as neatly above or below the band

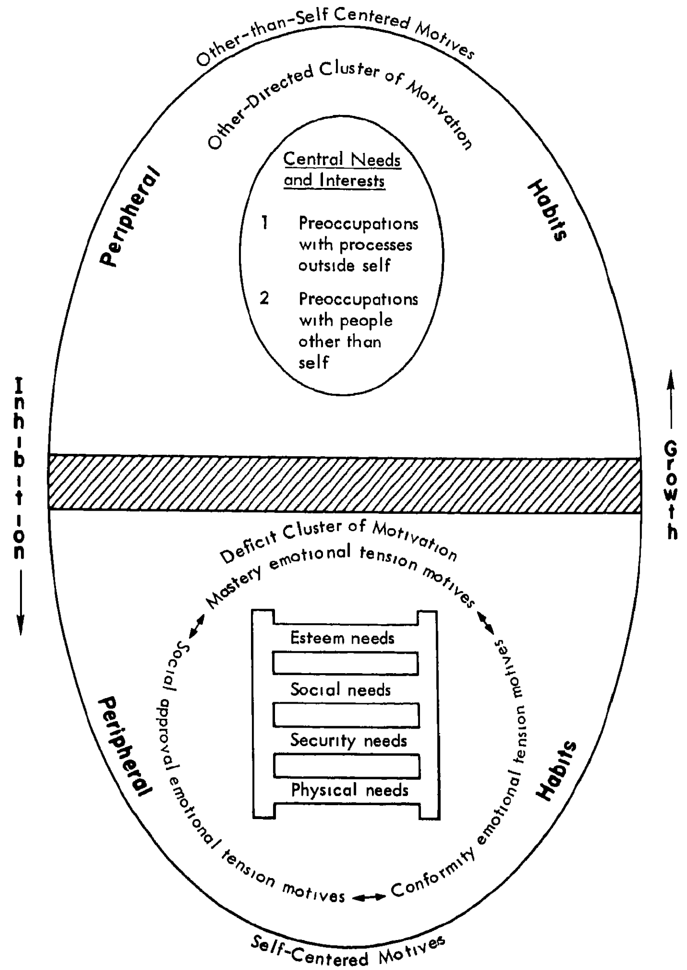

Figure 13 The Oval of Human Motivation

Within the lower circle we find two kinds of motivations, those in the deficit ladder that are sequential in their satisfactions, and the three emotional tension motives that spring from the emotional condition One can exit from the deficit circle only when he has climbed the ladder by securing a stable satisfaction of the four needs that are its rungs and has achieved a working balance among his mastery, social approval, and conformity motivations such that none of the three places excessive demands upon his time and energy

The upper circle includes the *central* needs and interests that are both "warm and important" to their owner and are focused outside his ego These other-directed motivations are divided into two kinds of

preoccupations, with processes and with persons Obviously, however, many other-than-self centered influences involve *both* people and processes

Above the band, peripheral habits are patterns of response that resemble other-directed motives in action but have little consequence These are casual units of behavior, initiated on impulse and abandoned without regret They are impromptu and variable, hence, they are poor predictors of response

Similarly, peripheral habits below the middle band simulate deficit and emotional tension motives at work These habits are easily initiated and terminated and provide few clues for the prediction of consistent response tendencies They are better envisioned as incidental role-playing episodes rather than diagnostic features of a personality

The arrow to the right of the oval suggests that movement in an upward direction is associated with growth, or maturing of a personality By and large, when a person gradually expends less energy and time satisfying self-centered motives, and relatively more energy and time tending to his other-directed preoccupations, he gains in mental health The arrow to the left of the oval represents a trend in the other direction If, over a period of time a person reduces his interest in other-than-self centered preoccupations and expends ever more time and energy satisfying deficit needs, he pays the price of increased inhibition and loss of freedom He becomes restricted because more of his attention is turned inward He loses flexibility and objectivity

The Oval of Human Motivation is a model that will help you to better understand habits and motives in yourself and in others Can you determine where *you* are in the diagram? Are your present dominant interests above or below the band? This and the short-range and long-range direction of your evolving motivations are key items in your self-analysis If you have insight into these dynamics of your personality, you have increased self-comprehension and you are in a position to plan more wisely for the future

When studying another person's motivation, start at the bottom of the oval Look for "deficit ladder" motives that are of persistent concern to him and search for evidence that one of his emotional tension motives may be exerting excessive influence Then assess particular other-than-self centered interests that are "warm and important" to him As you make this analysis, always remember that "Satisfied needs do not motivate behavior" Soon you will be able to make statements about his habits and motives that will help you to design your persuasive effort and predict his response to it

Individual initiative and action leading to group sponsored innovation and implementation of change are outstanding phenomena

of American culture in the twentieth century When an individual can be productive only through influencing groups of people, the process of communication assumes a central importance, and his skills in speech-communication become critical to getting things done The time is rapidly approaching when a person will succeed as a member or leader in a modern organization *only* if he has devoted time and effort to the systematic study of interpersonal communication per se

If this book has helped the reader to advance his systematic study of interpersonal communication and if it has helped to bring him to conscious competence in speech communication in the modern organization, it will have attained its major objectives

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Epilogue

Communicate or Die

The famous American anthropologist Dr Margaret Mead declared "No people in this world, in their capacities, are superior to, or inferior to, any other people " Her generalization has been widely subscribed to by anthropologists from every country in the Western world If one asks an anthropologist to explain the apparent difference in progress between the white Australian and the Australian aborigine (who may well be the most primitive of all living peoples today), the answer usually mentions such factors as climate, disease, natural resources, and the possible cross-fertilization with other cultures from which can be drawn useful ideas, tools, and materials

It is our conviction that the fourth is by far the most significant of the listed factors, and that it certainly is most important in discussing the plight of the aborigine Here is a true anachronism—a Stone Age people living in an electronic age Their implements are largely of stone, wood, shell, or bone, many still wear either no clothing at all or use a string or fur pubic apron attached to a girdle Their food consists largely of natural resources of animal and plant life After they had survived for what is usually estimated at some 15 centuries of insular existence upon

their one gigantic island continent, the white man came to Australia and an opportunity to draw strength from a new and complex culture was at hand

The effect was not a happy one, rather it resulted in near extinction for the black man His numbers decreased from 300,000 to about 30,000 full bloods in less than 200 years Of an original 700 tribes, each containing from 200 to 700 people, perhaps a score or so remain, and these only in the remote parts of Cape York, Northern Territory, central and western Australia Today the aborigines lead rather dismal lives A small minority follow their old tribal way of life, a large number live on or in contact with Government and Mission stations, some seek work in towns as common laborers or as domestic servants They have neither adopted the white man's culture, nor have they adapted well to it What is the explanation?

Are the anthropologists wrong after all? Can the aborigine's problem be the result of lower capacity to learn? Not so His demonstrated fighting ability with modern weapons in World War II was alone sufficiently impressive to give him new status with white Australia and her allies in northern Africa Six gifted members of the Outback Namitjira family have produced art work in demand around the world An unsubdued tribe on Groote Island in the Gulf of Carpenteria is making the long jump from Stone Age to Electronic Era with astonishing ease Today they are operating large machines and performing intricate tasks in the recovery of manganese recently located on their island, side by side with highly trained whites as co-workers The latter testify to the great capacities and astonishing aptitudes of the former Many excellent best selling books written about Australia are by aboriginal authors

Themselves baffled by the plight of their colored citizens, the Commonwealth Government recently completed a careful study designed to determine why the aborigines are being so slowly assimilated into the general population and why their income levels are so poor Their conclusion was simply stated, as follows "The central problem of the aborigine is a lack of verbal sophistication, a failure to attain enough mastery of the English language to permit him to compete well with the white Australian in our economy, or to be soon absorbed into our culture"

It is the belief of your authors that the difficulties of the Australian aborigines today truly are traceable to linguistic peculiarities and to a type of religion that perpetuated these peculiarities Before the white man came, each tribe had its own language or dialect, and none was written Each tribe believed that spirit Gods had given the tribe its own land area, and that the territory could never really be taken from its owners For many centuries these primitives, hemmed in by language and religion, had not rubbed shoulders culturally with even their nearest

neighbors Their entire history and experience had essentially been one of *evading* a cross-fertilization of cultures It is small wonder that assimilation and adaptation have recently proved so enormously difficult Yet today the aborigine will learn to communicate, or he will die

What lessons can be drawn from the present condition of Australia's black men? Several, we think As populations explode in the oncoming decades and as open space disappears, as cities grow vertically and bodies come even closer and closer together, as communication becomes less and less a voluntary thing and more and more a necessary thing, it may well be that the peoples of this world will either improve their interpersonal communication, or die

At this point the reader is probably thinking, "OK, so the future will bring vastly increased recognition of the importance of communication both to individuals and organizations But, where do we go from here? What trends help us to anticipate the future? As we learn more about the process of communication what, specifically, can we predict about the changes in our behavior in the coming organizations?" To the authors these are fair questions that deserve answers

One overriding trend is apparent and will continue at an accelerated pace In every area of human enterprise and in every geographical region the evolution of more and more complicated, specialized, and large organizations continues The small undifferentiated firm cannot compete with the power and efficiency of the large enterprise In the United States the small store, the small farm, the small company are giving way to the larger retail organization, the corporate farm, and the big industrial firm The major difference between the highly developed countries of Western Europe and North America and the underdeveloped and developing nations of Asia, Africa, and South America is the ability of the developed nations to create and maintain large organizations in business, industry, government, religion, and education

We are finally realizing that the specialized know-how required by underdeveloped nations is not just technical training but knowledge to establish and manage corporate structures as well If engineers and technicians cannot be brought together into efficient cooperation, and if they cannot be furnished with the resources necessary to research, develop, and market products, a country cannot develop an industrial economy

What accounts for the power and efficiency of the large organization? Throughout this book we have viewed the organization as a message-processing system It serves to bring together large numbers of talented people who have been narrowly but deeply specialized As a result their specialized knowledge can be used to solve large problems As a reading glass collects the scattered rays of the sun and concentrates them with maximum effect on one point, so the organization can collect

the technical skills and knowledge of a number of specialists and concentrate them with maximum effect The basic technique of coordination is interpersonal communication, the most common setting for collective problem solving is the group meeting

The large organization can afford more narrowly and more highly specialized personnel than can the small organization or the individual enterprise When the internal communications of the large organization function to bring the resources of the specialists into efficient collaboration, it can produce more efficiently and tackle larger objectives than the relatively undeveloped and small organization that has fewer specialists at its disposal

The Marshall Plan poured economic aid into Western Europe to rebuild the economies of those countries after the Second World War With an infusion of capital the citizens of Western Europe who knew how to create the modern organization soon rebuilt their economies Subsequently, the United States spent billions of dollars for economic aid to underdeveloped countries All of this capital resulted in little development because the citizens of these countries did not have the knowledge required to create and sustain healthy organizations

What does this trend mean for you, the reader of this book? It means that if you have the knowledge to create and sustain tomorrow's organizations, if you have the managerial skills, including the communication ability to integrate and coordinate the work of specialists, you need not fear that you will become obsolete Many observers of the current scene, impressed by the rapid expansion of automation and computer technology, have predicted that the organization of the future will need very few, if any, managers Some assert that lower and middle management will be replaced by banks of blinking machines Others hypothesize that upper management will wither away, unable to compete with computerized decision making Nothing in the evolution of organizations supports such projections Rather, as organizations grow more complex and larger, the need for people with managerial skills increases What the peoples in the developing nations need is not more computers but more individuals with the ability to found organizations and make them work Increasingly, highly developed organizations will depend upon technological advances in information storage and retrieval to free specialists and leaders from boring routine tasks The basic job of getting things done through people will remain However, the definition of management of the future may be "getting things done through the coordination of people and computers"

We will increasingly need the man of judgment to improve the utilization of the machine Decisions imply goals and values In the final analysis, organizational decision making must include wise men hammer-

ing out goals and values in conferences and discussions Leadership will be exercised by informing, persuading, listening, and effective group participation, with one major difference The return from successful communication will be higher, for the computer will multiply the output potential of each human being involved in the enterprise

The present trend toward greater specialization will not be reversed Specialists will be freed of restrictive channels of communication and will increasingly share their contributions with other specialists in small group conferences and interpersonal dialogues Wide-open informal exchanges between individuals rather than between organizational units will characterize the organizations of the future because such exchanges are faster, more accurate, and more productive of desirable change than are most structured patterns of communication

Competition among all organized enterprises will continue to increase Management's approach to vigorous competition will change in that development of personnel will come to overshadow improvement in processes and products as an organizational objective In 1966 Henry Tseng, managing director of Scientific Service Company, Ltd , Hong Kong, anticipated this new approach when he said, "The only way I can keep ahead of my competitors is to develop my personnel faster than they do theirs " His elaborately equipped training facilities were busy from 8 A M to 5 P M , seven days a week That the achievements of an organization are limited only by the potential of its members will come to be more clearly and universally understood Once accepted, this premise will make inevitable new goals and objectives, stated in terms of helping individual people receive appropriate education to enhance their skills and abilities Interpersonal communication will remain the dominant means of accomplishing upgrading of personnel

Changes in Our Attitude Toward Communication

Where many of us now expect almost every communication attempt to succeed, our more realistic successors will anticipate a relatively high percentage of failure The normal result of communication in an organization is considerable misunderstanding When communication breaks down, the inept organization first tries to answer the question, "Who is to blame?" The more sophisticated organization asks, instead, "How can we correct the situation and move ahead?" Fixing blame will come to be recognized as largely nonproductive, and since both effective and ineffective organizations inevitably have many communication breakdowns, the way of life of the future will be to anticipate failure and to develop routine preventive and corrective procedures

The present tendency to glorify individual effort and to view group meetings as less useful and efficient than people working alone will give way to an understanding of the importance of group efforts. We are beginning to realize that the group meeting is the basic communication setting that an organization uses to utilize the knowledge of specialists fully and to coordinate their efforts on a given project. The work group creates a condition conducive to maximum feedback in which individual specialists can mobilize the organization's resources as well as their knowledge. The organization requires many meetings and conferences simply because they are the primary vehicle by which the corporate structure does its job.

We are just beginning to understand the importance of listening in the entire process of interpersonal communication. Because babies start to listen at an early age, and because it is easy to assume that the quiet receiver is listening to the message, we have overlooked the necessity of conscious study and competence in this most vital part of the communication process. In the future, listening skills will be recognized as essential to the successful manager.

At present, our attitude toward persuasion in the modern organization is as unenlightened as our failure to understand the constructive role of persuasion in the democratic process. Persuasion will come to be accepted as the major responsibility of the manager, the way he "gets things done through people." Acceptance of persuasion as essential to all group enterprise will be hastened by increased understanding of its process. We are now discovering that man makes decisions of importance through use of his critical faculties to a considerably greater extent than was previously believed. This finding will become more widely recognized, and the persuasion of the future will influence people predominately through "facts of the case" argument. Tricks of the trade, formulas in general, and the use of suggestion will yield to reasoned forms of influence, particularly in task-oriented communication. When men are persuaded through appeal to their reason, many so-called ethical objections to persuasion as a tool of management and government will be swept away.

A major change in attitude will affect the way we view the act of communicating. Already we have profoundly shaken the old notion that the content of a message is mostly words, and can be understood in isolation. Now we see messages as occurring in a "universe of things, events, people" at certain times with their impact upon people being as much a function of circumstances as of content. *Interaction* of sender and receiver is looming larger in importance, and this aspect of communication will receive still more attention. But the greatest modification of the concept "interpersonal communication" will come from the discovery and understanding of its nonverbal dimension.

We will come to include posture, gesture, tones of voice, facial expression, eye contact, conversational distance, physical surroundings, events that precede and follow our language, as parts of the message that are just as capable of influencing response as the words we use. These elements will be consciously planned when used by skilled communicators. They will be evaluated by observers, and their influence upon meanings in a message will be subjected to concrete analysis.

We are much impressed by the nonverbal dimension of spoken communication, what anthropologist Edward T. Hall terms "The Silent Language." We would have liked to include much definite information about what nonverbal communication is and how it works, in this book. Regrettably, the present "state of the art" made this impossible. Obviously, elements other than words profoundly modify responses to messages, but the studies that show how this occurs remain to be done. Cultural anthropologists have formulated a few generalizations about differences between our culture and others in appropriate nonverbal behavior that accompanies speech in a few specified situations. Even these generalizations need to be tested under controlled conditions. Only future research can reveal the effects of specific behavior patterns on particular interpretation of messages. At present, the authors can only urge that people who communicate recognize the importance of nonverbal elements and attempt to utilize them constructively.

An attitude change that can be anticipated in the near future is a new orientation, the substitution of a worldwide perspective for a narrow localism. The way we now conduct business and train people in our organizations is severely culturebound. Organizations are set up to operate, and their personnel are influenced to believe that business everywhere is conducted the way it is in the Midwest, or the Deep South, or the Eastern Seaboard of the United States. The fact of the matter is that tremendous differences in ways of doing business and in patterns of communicating are found at different places on the surface of the earth. We used to think of these differences as caused by the language barrier. Now we know that language is a relatively minor factor. Much more important are contrasting values, customs, and preconceived ideas as to what is appropriate behavior under particular circumstances.

We do not need to repeat the story of our fantastic developments in rapid and efficient transportation and communications. The important consequence is that any of us involved in activities of the modern organization may at any time confront opportunity almost anywhere. We cannot afford to wait until the chance to establish a branch in Upper Volta appears, then try to prepare people to go there. In the future, communication training must be broadened to include variations in a sample of contrasting cultures. Personnel cannot be prepared in depth to enter any

community in the world, but they can and will be trained in terms of general adaptations necessitated by moving to a strange country People in large organizations can receive more detailed training to prepare them to do business and communicate in a region that has a somewhat homogeneous culture, such as Latin America

Removing the culturebound limits of training in communication is already taking place in the more progressive academic institutions Interpersonal communication is taught in a spectrum of value systems and contrasting sets-of-expectations found inside and outside the United States The leader, manager, and executive operates more and more as a world citizen Organizations of the future will devote much time, energy, and money in their effort to make possible efficient operation in far-flung locales They will devise ways of adjusting to these modified procedures in the home office, where blending a dozen or so "local customs" in the field remains today an unsolved problem

New Frontiers to Improve Effectiveness of Interpersonal Communication

Many times in this book the authors have stressed the low efficiency and the slow rate of speech The speed of thought vastly surpasses the maximum rate of even rapid speech, transmission of sound with or without electronic aids is susceptible to distortion, the process of perception in the receiver is variable and, to a significant degree, unpredictable What improvements may contribute to the refinement of speech-communication?

A helpful measure is to add visual cues to spoken words wherever possible Closed-circuit television is a reality, bringing distant communicators together, showing the nonverbal as well as verbal elements of speech and making possible the use of objects, displays, and demonstrations We are only beginning to learn word economy when pictures accompany recorded or transmitted sound Communicators of the future will be much more efficient than at present in achieving effective, supplementary interaction of visual and audible elements to transmit a maximum of meaning—accurately—in minimum time

The television telephone will contribute to this improvement because of its universal distribution When everyone can see as well as hear the events at the other end of the line, misunderstandings will be reduced and time will be saved With the change from black and white to color on the TV telephone and similar closed-circuit televising equipment another sharp gain in efficiency will be achieved A wealth of detail, which cannot be supplied by words, is lost in the gray-black image, details be-

come perceptible, and products more salable, when color is added to the picture

Our rapidly evolving technology is certain to produce inexpensive, portable, wireless television transceivers for personal use The wrist TV that connects its wearer with any television telephone in the world may be only a few years away Organizational interaction will be facilitated by up-to-the-minute information and instantaneous response resulting from improved technology in both wired and wireless television and telephones Every advance that permits *more* visual and auditory communication between individuals in the same interval increases the effectiveness of interpersonal communication

Time-binding will further contribute to the utility of the spoken interaction Compact, cheap video-tape records will be easily stored Key conferences, important negotiations, oral contracts will be made a matter of record without the costly intermediate steps of transcribing, typing, and filing Techniques of information retrieval will guarantee immediate, automated playback of the desired video tape through any remote outlet The distance factor will become insignificant Through expanded telephone-television services video tapes in storage a 1,000 miles away will be viewed as quickly and clearly as those in the same building

A contrasting approach to improving speech-communication is the attempt to increase its speed Two avenues are being explored one, the effort to increase the meaning transmitted by the same number of words, the other, to increase the number of words transmitted and received in a given interval of time

Research on the first approach shows quite clearly that leaving out certain words in sentences and certain syllables in words need not reduce intelligibility Consequently, a given number of words, properly selected and arranged, can be made to convey considerably more than average amounts of information This approach suggests that conventional grammar and traditional usages may yield to criteria of communication efficiency

The second speed-increase approach is exemplified by "compressed speech" By controlling frequency response of a playback mechanism a recording of speech can be speeded up by a factor of two to three without serious loss to intelligibility, depending upon the nature of message content Thus, an hour's spoken presentation could be listened to in 20 to 30 minutes

Combining the two approaches to speeding up spoken communication shows promise of reaching the goal of many compressed-speech enthusiasts, increasing the efficiency of speech transmission by a factor of eight

All attempts to increase the speed of speech-communication ulti-

mately rest, of course, upon highly developed listening skills The trend, already underway, to recognize the importance of listening in interpersonal communication in the modern organization will be accelerated by the technology of compressed speech

In the opinion of the present authors, the major frontier for the improvement of interpersonal communication in the modern organization lies outside the realms of electronic and mechanical technology The trend that shows most promise is the steady advance of the social sciences in the world of communication This book draws upon the resources of linguistics, sociology, psychology, anthropology, psychotherapy, and other formerly separate disciplines The study of communication is intrinsically interdisciplinary, for no one academic department encompasses its multitudinous variables In the future, those who study interpersonal communication from differing points of view and under different auspices will increasingly pool their findings with mutual benefit

The common ground that will bring scholars and practitioners of many fields together in the study of communication is their interest in the nature of the human being The importance of developing insights into human nature is highlighted by a profound maxim *You cannot influence a man you do not understand* The truth of this statement is now almost universally conceded If you cannot influence a person without understanding him, then the study or research that provides information about the determinants of human response will surely contribute to improvement of human communication The central purpose of the social sciences is to increase our understanding of man and his works

At the time this book is written a central social science interest in the study of communication is *motivation* Over the past decade psychology, sociology, and social psychology have led a revolution against theories of motivation from the past We now consider motives as all-important energizers of human response Classification systems of motives are being checked against behavior, and ways of measuring relative strength of particular motives are being devised The problem of triggering the motives that will impel a person in a given direction is being explored through scientific experimentation We can expect in the future that leaders of organizations will know far better than they do now the interests, needs, desires, and goals of the people they work with Assignments will be adjusted to individuals so that their interests can be gratified and their potential productivity reached through carefully nurtured personal growth Communication will relate more directly to the particular person, and as a result he will be considerably more involved (highly motivated) in his work

Not only the motives of men need to be known Individuals must be examined in the context of their basic reference and work groups

The influence of various groups upon a given individual and the rewards and pressures these groups exert upon a person permit a more complete account of his behavior than an understanding of his individual motivation alone In addition, the larger culture and its general value systems interact with individuals to shape their interests and provide experiences that form their personalities Knowledge of these matters is, again, most accessible in the social sciences "People knowledge"—wherever it is found—is a source that will be mined aggressively by the expert in communication

We can expect that the study of communication may itself be recognized as an important social science Human interaction is so central to all social relationships that the isolation of the interaction process—interpersonal communication—for intensive study is inevitable We will have specialists with Master's and Ph D degrees in communication whose background includes a formerly unknown variety of disciplines The broad view of communication may become the norm After all, many anthropologists contend, "All culture is 'communication' "

Thus, as the reader finishes this book he has completed some of the first conscious exploratory steps toward understanding the future organization, its development and management Whatever direction technology may take, no matter how much computer techniques modify organizations, the need for people who can communicate will increase rather than decrease Hence, if you wish to prepare for the future, you should continue the study of communication The member of tomorrow's organization must increase his effectiveness in interpersonal communication today, or, like the aborigines of Australia, he will fail to adapt to imminent, rapid cultural-technological change

Annotated Bibliography

NOTE BY THE AUTHORS The literature relating to the theories and concepts developed in this book is voluminous and much of it is written in the technical jargon of the specialist Some of our ideas as expressed in the preceding pages were drawn from the books listed below This bibliography is not complete, rather we have picked the most useful and up to-date books relating to the theories and lines of thought that influenced our writing Each item in the bibliography provides a good next step for the reader who wants to go into these matters in greater detail The annotations represent our evaluations of the works

Allport, Gordon W , *Pattern and Growth in Personality* New York Holt, Rinehart & Winston, Inc , 1961

This may well be the best balanced analysis of personality, the factors that enter into its structuring, and the role of motivations in the lives of people Although written by a famous psychologist it is interesting to the layman and reading it poses no technical difficulties

Berlo, David K , *The Process of Communication An Introduction to Theory and Practice* New York Holt, Rinehart & Winston, Inc , 1960

An excellent exposition of basic communication theory Berlo's model of the communication process has been widely adopted by other students of communication The book has a definite point of view to the effect that all communication is persuasion, it includes a complete analysis of all elements of the communication process as well as the dynamics of the process The book is written in a clear and interesting style

Bormann, Ernest G , *Discussion and Group Methods* New York Harper & Row, Publishers, 1969

This book analyzes in detail the nature of group discussion, conferences, and meetings It includes suggestions and exercises leading to improved performance in group participation and leadership It treats comprehensively of small group theory as it relates to work groups and their relationship to organizational structure and communication It provides an understanding of group methods as they relate to discussions and conferences

Frankl, Viktor E , *Man's Search for Meaning An Introduction to Logotherapy* Translated by Ilse Lasch Boston Beacon Press, 1963

A book that utilizes Dr Frankl's long experience in concentration camps to develop significant insights into human motivation His analysis of "meaning" of emotions is particularly significant, as is his concept of "will to meaning" He shows the motive power of interests centered outside the self

Johnson, Wendell, *Your Most Enchanted Listener* New York Harper & Row, Publishers, 1956

This book demonstrates that mental troubles, phobias, frustrations, and general insecurity are the product of man's failure to talk fully and frankly to himself—in other words, to think clearly One can hardly read this volume without improving to some degree his mental and emotional stability in a troubled and turbulent world The book abounds with appropriate anecdotes and examples and is very readable

Lee, Irving J , *How To Talk With People A Program for Preventing Troubles That Come When People Talk Together* New York Harper & Row, Publishers, 1953

This is a useful summary of one man's experience consulting with business and industry about their communication problems The author provides many case studies and examples from his experience, he points

out the causes for many of the communication breakdowns and suggests concrete solutions for them

Likert, Rensis, *The Human Organization Its Management and Value* New York McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1967

A brief treatment of a theory of management that recognizes the importance of group decision making and group methods of supervision in the modern organization The theory was originally developed in *New Patterns of Management* (McGraw-Hill, 1961) and is here amplified and supported by more recent research The author recognizes the dynamic nature of organizational communication and its importance to successful management

McGregor, Douglas, *The Professional Manager* Edited by Warren G Bennis and Caroline McGregor New York McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1967

A brief exposition of the thinking of the man who wrote *The Human Side of Enterprise* (McGraw-Hill, 1960) The author ably treats of the way human motives express themselves in small groups and organizations He emphasizes the importance of the manager's perceptions of himself, his role, and his group in the functioning of the organization The book contains an excellent discussion of teamwork and its relationship to group decision making

Nichols, Ralph G, and Leonard A Stevens, *Are You Listening?* New York McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1957

This book analyzes in detail the handicaps of the poor listener and provides many helpful suggestions and exercises leading to improved performance Because this work increases the reader's awareness of the role of listening in our daily lives, it has proved of great value to managers, educators, counselors, salesmen, theologians, and persons interested in communications research For several years it has been one of the top ten best sellers in business training

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(from front flap)

of sociology, psychology, anthropology, and business administration, the book employs case studies and examples that will carry immediate conviction and understanding to executives, doctors, teachers, lawyers, and other professionals who work within an organizational context Readers who are planning careers in such fields will find INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION IN THE MODERN ORGANIZATION to be of vital value in anticipating and solving the problems they will encounter in their chosen fields

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ERNEST G. BORMANN, WILLIAM S HOWELL, RALPH G NICHOLS, and GEORGE L. SHAPIRO collectively represent over seventy-five years of experience in the analysis of communications problems for such organizations as state departments of education; the Department of Agriculture; the Treasury Department; the Internal Revenue Service; the Army, Air Force, and Veterans' Administration, municipal governments; political parties, juvenile judges and officers, and such industrial giants as General Electric, U.S Steel, General Motors, IBM, National Cash Register, and Ford.

Each of the authors is a nationally recognized authority on interpersonal communication, and each has distinguished himself in designing communication training programs to fulfill the needs of specialized organizations. This book is the distillation of their years of experience.

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